Merrill's English Texts

SELECTED LETTERS

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SELECTED LETTERS

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Merrill's English Texts

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PREFACE

THE study of the familiar social letter holds an important place in the English curricula of secondary schools and colleges. It is a distinct literary type worthy of study for its form as well as its content; it is superior to other types in its power to enrich the student's literary associations; it has a liberalizing influence that pushes his horizon beyond provincial bounds; and finally, it often arouses in him the ambition to be a better literary craftsman himself. A student may be sceptical of the value of attempting to write fiction, or poetry, or drama, but he rarely questions the usefulness of the practice of letter-writing. It is hoped that this collection of letters may stimulate him to find a means of expressing himself in a fresh, direct, sincere fashion, free from stereotyped phrases, especially when he sees in the great letters of literature that the obscurest details of one's life may be invested with literary charm and atmosphere. Letter-writing is not a decadent art, as many think, but in this day of the picture postcard, the telegram blank, and the telephone, young people need encouragement in the development of the art.

A variety of principles has determined the choice of letters in this volume. Those have been selected that seem good examples of the familiar, personal type; those also are included that will make the student better acquainted with the authors whose works he will probably read in high school and college. Perhaps still other letters may lead him to an acquaintance with writers who will be pleasant and profitable companions in later years when the pressure of schoolroom régime has been removed. A wide reading in letters may accomplish much toward making the student at home in that magic world bounded by the covers of a book—the real purpose of a course in literature.

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INTRODUCTION

THE LETTER IN LITERATURE

Description of Letters. The letter of the familiar, personal type defies definition but invites description. It resembles the kind of essay perfected by Lamb and Stevenson, being informal and, apparently, artless and unpremeditated. It belongs, like the lyric, to the literature of self-revelation. Letters are the quintessence of a man's life, or, as Lowell phrased it, "the real inside of him." They are the expression of a mood and succeed in so far as the writer is able to capture a thing so fleeting, and put it on paper. Jane Carlyle's mood of impatience, Fitzgerald's serenity, Dickens's sportive gaiety, Johnson's outraged dignity, have been crystallized into letters of interest and charm. A letter-writer abandons himself to the passing mood, and his letter usually keeps to the same "tone" from beginning to end.

Intellectual originality and human sympathy characterize really great letters which touch the heart as well as the head. Carlyle thanked Fitzgerald for his "friendly, human letter." The object of the letter is not to "enlarge the bounds of human thought. It is to amuse, to please, to excite sympathy and interest, to keep up friendship and annihilate distance." The first essential of the letter is style—that is, not what one writes about but the way in which one writes about it. A good letter has the keen edge of talk and, in addition, facility of style. To quote from Dr. Johnson's Dictionary: "The stile of letters ought to be free, easy, and natural; as near approaching to familiar conversation as possible: the two best qualities in conversation are, good humour and good breeding; those letters are therefore certainly the best that show the most of these two qualities." The second essential is the person to whom the letter is written—

a reader with imaginative sympathy. The recipient determines half the letter, and if the recipient has not this consciousness as he reads, the letter fails. The real message is between the lines and has application to two people only. In short, a letter is talking on paper to a friend, with no restraints except those imposed by one's native reserve and good taste.

Comments on Letters. It is interesting to note the comments of the greatest letter-writers. Cowper, in writing to Lady Hesketh, says: "When I read your letters, I hear you talk, and I love talking letters dearly." On one occasion when Carlyle had written from Germany too much about the scenery, and too little about his digestion, Jane Carlyle writes: "Don't mind length, at least only write longly about yourself. The cocks that awake you; everything of that sort is very interesting. I hasten over the clever descriptions of extraneous people and things to find something 'all about yourself all to myself.'" She calls her own letters "egotistical babblement," but critics rank her as one of the greatest letter-writers. She was once asked why women who did not write books always wrote so much "nicer letters than those who did." She replied that she supposed it was because "they did not write in the 'Valley of the Shadow' of their future biographer, but wrote what they had to say frankly and naturally." Who does not share her objection to that pernicious habit that makes letters common property? "There is a circulation of letters in families that frightens me from writing often; it is difficult to write a circular letter to one." A true letter shows for whom it was intended, even if the names of the recipient and the writer are detached. Every one requires a letter all to himself, and responds indifferently to one held in common.

Lowell, a versatile and gifted letter-writer, insisted that he did not like to write letters. He asks, "How return a pressure of the hand by next day's post, when the other term of the equation has by this time got his fist in his pocket and is thinking of something else?" He thinks that "an author's works are his letters to his friends, and if they cannot feel in reading them that they are freshly remembered, then the works are not good for much."

In a letter to Mrs. Francis G. Shaw, Lowell sums up his attitude toward letter-writing:

"You know that I promised solemnly to write you a letter from Switzerland and therefore, of course, I didn't do it. These epistolary promises to pay always do (or at least always ought to) come back protested. A letter ought always to be the genuine and natural flower of one's disposition—proper both to the writer and the season—and none of your turnip japonicas cut laboriously out of a cheap and flabby material. Then, when you have sealed it up, it comes out fresh and fragrant. I do not like shuttle-cock correspondence. What is the use of our loving people if they can't let us owe them a letter? They can't be sure we keep on loving them if we don't keep sending an acknowledgment under our hands and seals once a month? As if there were a statute of limitations for affection!"

Again he writes characteristically: "At last, like a true lazarone as I am, I have been waiting for sunshine before I wrote—I mean for one of those moods that would make a letter worth sending; and such a mood is not dependent on mere cheerfulness, but almost altogether on having nothing to do, so that one can have time to hatch one's thoughts fairly out as one goes along."

Edward Fitzgerald, an incomparable letter-writer, agrees with Lowell, that leisure is a requisite of letter-writing. He writes: "When I began this letter I thought I had something to say: but I believe the truth was I had nothing to do."

It would be hard to find a better picture of comfortable ease and pleasurable anticipation at the prospect of talking to a friend than in another letter of his: "7¼ P. M.—After a stroll in mine own Garden, under the moon—shoes kicked off—slippers and Dressing Gown on—a Pinch of Snuff—and hey for a Letter—to my only London Correspondent!"

Thomas Moore's comment on a certain letter has the true Irish flavor: "And troth, it's a letter myself would like better, could I manage to lave the contints of it out."

Characteristics of Letter-writers. Great men of letters are not necessarily great letter-writers. The characteristics of a

good letter and of a literary masterpiece are not the same. The letter-writer has little regard for proportion; he mingles the significant and the insignificant; he is indifferent that ideas should follow each other in logical sequence; he gives a mood free play. That which is fatal to the formal masterpiece is essential to the life of the letter. Yet Lamb, Lowell, Fitzgerald, Gray, Cowper, Lanier, Matthew Arnold succeeded in investing the intimate letter with literary charm, and at the same time produced some of the masterpieces of English literature.

A good letter-writer possesses the temperament that makes and holds friends. He is usually an impressionable, lively, sensitive individual with humane impulses and sympathetic thoughts. He is able to describe the commonplace details of the routine of life in such a way as to strike a responsive chord in the reader. Is he not like that rare individual who is more interesting after a two-mile jaunt than other people after a tour around the world? The best letter-writers make the reader feel an increasing tenderness for them.

Many great letter-writers give the impression of having ample leisure, "a plentiful lack of business." Fitzgerald, Lamb, Walpole, Madame de Sêvigné, Lady Montagu, Cowper, Gray never seem hurried. Letter-writing was for them a diversion and recreation. They poured out their souls lavishly, and the world of letters is richer for their prodigality.

Contents of Letters. It is an interesting study to note the contents of letters. Jane Carlyle gives spirited accounts of the annual spring-cleaning, the sleep-disturbing chickens, and even the back-fence cat. Lafcadio Hearn writes vividly of New York with its "cubic miles of cut granite and iron fury." Brunswick (Georgia) with its marsh-grass and jessamine and magnolia, London with its street-cries and theaters, are to Lanier and Lamb material for delightful letters that have an enduring place in the authors' works. Robert Burns wrote to one of his correspondents: "I insist that you shall write whatever comes first, what you see, what you read, what you hear, what you admire, what you dislike, trifles, bagatelles, nonsense; or to

fill up a corner, e'en put down a laugh at full length." In brief, anything serves as material for a letter, from the grocer's bill to literary criticism.

Writers Revealed in Letters. Great letter-writers reveal themselves frankly in their letters and convince the reader that they are

"not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food."

When Swift writes London gossip to Steele, Goldsmith his apologetic request for money, Lamb a description of a cold in the head, they seem no longer remote literary figures, but familiar friends. John Henry Newman wrote: "It has ever been a hobby of mine, though perhaps it is a truism, not a hobby, that the true life of a man is in his letters." Generations ago Lord Bacon recorded the following: "Letters, such as are written from wise men, are, of all the words of men, in my judgment, the best." Even with a casual perusal of their letters, one is impressed with Franklin's economy and prudence, Lee's devotion to duty, Lamb's affection for London, Stevenson s whimsical playfulness, Jane Carlyle's high-strung sensitiveness, Cowper's affectionate disposition and religious melancholia, and Lanier's absorption in his art.

The best letters are those which accurately mirror the character of the writer and show him to be delightful and lovable; they make us acquainted with what is best in the writer. The letters that have the surest place in literature are those with a lucid, healthy, hearty tone—a quality that pervades the writings of Fitzgerald, Lowell, and Arnold.

Times and Places Revealed in Letters. The letter holds the mirror up to times and places. It reflects the social, political, literary, and industrial condition of the contemporary age. Letter-writers say what they mean and mean what they say, because, as a rule, they do not write for publication, and so give sincere utterance to their opinions and feelings. The letter is one of the best sources from which historians draw their material.

Franklin's letters from Versailles, for example, give a lively picture of court life in France as well as of our American Revolution. From Meredith's letters to his son Arthur, who was traveling in Germany during the Franco-Prussian War, one infers the anxiety and unrest that hovered over Europe, even among the noncombatants. Hearn's letters help us to reconstruct life in the French quarter of New Orleans and Memphis of a generation ago; from Japan he writes those letters that make us feel instinctively why "East is East and West is West." Samoa is no longer an island in the South Pacific Seas, but the home of Stevenson, which one approaches by the Road of the Loving Heart.

The Play-impulse in Letters. In no other form of literature, so much as in the letter, do writers manifest their tendency to play. It is as refreshing as it is unexpected to find the letter that Jane Carlyle's dog wrote to Carlyle for his mistress. When publishers were clamoring for manuscript, Stevenson took the time to write to Annie Ide and solemnly bequeath his birthday to her. Charles Dickens's letter in the form of statements full of technicalities, denying the current rumor of his ill-health, suggests Mark Twain's similar statement: "Reports of my death greatly exaggerated." Goldsmith, oppressed with debt and illness, wrote a letter in rhyme to Catherine Horneck Bunbury, explaining his failure to accept her invitation. It is hard to believe that the author of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* wrote the letter to his granddaughter about the swivel nose. The Minister to the Court of St. James signs himself, "Yours cordially, Llumbago Lowell."

Literary Criticism in Letters. It is especially interesting to read letters for expressions of contemporary literary criticism. It is necessary for time to elapse before a true verdict can be reached, yet a fellow-craftsman's opinion is always worthy of consideration. How sincere and direct is the following from Walter Savage Landor:

"I have been cushioning my old head in a pillow of novels. What a delightful book is Bulwer's *Caxtons! Esmond*, too, is a novel that has surprised me. Never could I have believed that

Thackeray, great as his abilities are, could have written so noble a story as *Esmond*. On your recommendation I have since been reading the whole of *Humphrey Clinker*. It seems to me that I have read a part of it before. Every letter ends with a rigmarole, then much in fashion, and thought to be very graceful. By *rigmarole* I mean such a termination as this: 'It had liked to have kindled the flames of discord in the family of yours always, etc.' A tail always curls round the back of the letter-writer, and sticks to his sincerely, etc. How would Cicero and Pliny and Trajan have laught at this circumbendibus! I must now run to Dickens for refreshment. He is a never failing resource; and what an astonishing genius he is!"

Classification of Letters. Letters might be classified in various groups. There are the love letters of Steele, of Keats, of the Brownings, of Mérimée, of Pope, and of Victor Hugo; the letters in praise of cities, such as Lamb's; the letters in condemnation of cities, such as Carlyle's of London, and Hearn's of New York, and Gibbons's of Venice. Then there are the graceful letters from the recipients of gifts, as Lamb's expression of appreciation of brawn, Holmes's of a barometer, and Jane Carlyle's of an egg-cup. The illustrated letter is unique and suggests how effectively a sketch may supplement words. Thackeray in his letters to the Baxter family, Hearn in his letters from Memphis, New Orleans, and Grande Island, Eugene Field in his descriptions of one of his chief interests, baseball, all imparted interest and variety to their communications by means of the illustration. What delightful reading are those letters written to children by their elders! Dickens, Sydney Smith, Stevenson, Lewis Carroll, Phillips Brooks, Thackeray, and others understood children and have immortalized certain little people.

Many of the finest letters have been written under pressure of grief. John Sterling faces certain death and tries to lessen the suffering that his friend, Carlyle, must undergo; the philosophy of Emerson revolves around a little mound when he tries to write Carlyle of the death of his eldest child. He writes: "A few weeks ago I accounted myself a very rich man, and now the poorest of

all. The eye of my home was plucked out when that little innocent boy departed in his beauty and perfection from my sight." Browning's very effort to maintain his self-control in writing of Mrs. Browning's death is an indication of the profound struggle beneath the surface. Cicero's letter to Atticus at the time of the death of his daughter Tullia reveals him as a man moved by a profound personal grief, in contrast with the orator convicting offenders of the law.

The Effect of Reading Letters. The effect of wide reading in letters compensates one for the time and effort. The reader associates with men of letters on the most informal terms, when they express themselves frankly. Such association remedies crudeness and provinciality, and develops ease, grace, and discriminating taste.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY AND COMPOSITION

NOTE. *To the teacher:* Writing, that is, expressing thoughts on paper, is a social activity. Particularly, should letter-writing be a response to a real demand in one's experience. Hence, the suggested exercises in composition work can be only hints, which the resourceful teacher will adapt to meet the needs of the individual class. The student should be encouraged to think of a real occasion in his life when a certain type of letter is an essential part of his experience. It is still better to utilize some happening in the life of the school or the individual that demands a letter of a given type. The motive for writing then becomes social, and the need real, not artificial or manufactured.

If a class or society or athletic team has recently accepted the hospitality of another school, or if certain students have recently returned from visits, such events are occasions for instruction in the theory and practice of letter-writing. The inventive teacher may effect a correspondence between students of different sections of the country, and so supply a real motive for a letter describing a place or the daily routine. Unless a letter grows out of the social experiences of the student, its style will be mechan-

ical and lifeless and its contents dry as dust. The letters cited are in no sense to serve as models to be slavishly copied. They are merely instances of what others have written as occasion demanded.

I. 1. What are the characteristics of Madame de Sévigné's letters?

2. Do you agree with her that her letter regarding Picard is a "model of a pleasant narrative" (p. 29)?

3. Has some event of great interest occurred recently in your community? If so, give an account of it in a letter.

II. 4. Irving thought one should give "days and nights" to the study of Addison. Do you see any resemblance in the style of the two writers?

5. Compare Addison's letter with others expressing appreciation of a gift.

6. Write a letter of thanks for a gift.

III. 7. Do Lady Montagu's letters possess all the requisites of the familiar social letter, mentioned in "The Letter in Literature" (p. 9)? How could her letters be made more interesting?

IV. 8. Compare Lord Chesterfield's style and that of Lady Montagu. Is there any resemblance?

V. 9. Read Irving's *Life of Goldsmith* for an account of "The Literary Club," of which Goldsmith, Johnson, Garrick, and Boswell were members.

10. Characterize briefly the members of the Club.

11. Compare Goldsmith's description of Holland with Byron's (p. 161).

12. Write in rhyme an acceptance to an invitation.

VI. 13. Compare Gray's account of the coronation of George III with Walpole's. (See Walpole's *Letters to Horace Mann*, vol. 1, pp. 41–44, and *Miscellaneous Letters*, vol. IV.)

VII. 14. Walpole gives a vivid picture of his villa at Strawberry Hill. Write a description of some well-known house that you have visited; for example, the Jumel Mansion in New York, Mount Vernon, Monticello, or the Hermitage.

VIII. 15. What are the characteristics of Cowper's letters that make him rank as one of the greatest English letter-writers?

16. What are the subjects of Cowper's letters?

IX. 17. Sir Walter Scott's letter to his daughter shows his antiquarian interests. What use did he make of his antiquarian scholarship in his novels?

X. 18. "Lamb was fortunate in his friends." Expand this statement, and indicate what qualities of Lamb recommended him to his friends.

19. Write a letter to a friend who is ill or convalescent, taking a hint from Lamb's letter to his friend, Dibdin.

20. Write to a friend a description of a recent visit you have made.

XI. 21. In connection with Irving's letters, read his description of English country life in *The Sketch-Book*, and selections from *Abbotsford* and *Newstead Abbey*. His letter from Spain suggests an interesting group of his writings, *The Alhambra*, *Moorish Chronicles*, and *The Conquest of Granada*. Read in *The Alhambra* an account of his residence in the Moorish palace.

XII. 22. In connection with Byron's letters, read Shelley's for a description of Byron's life and habits.

23. What English men of letters lived in Italy in the first quarter of the nineteenth century?

XIII. 24. Write a description of a journey, making the petty details of travel as vivid and interesting as Keats did.

XIV. 25. Note the letters in this volume addressed to children;

for example, those from Hood, Dickens, Lewis Carroll, and Thackeray. What is the attitude of the writer?

26. Write a letter to a child with whom you are on intimate terms.

XV. 27. Why is Jane Carlyle ranked as one of the greatest of English letter-writers? What is the material of her letters?

28. Write a letter to a friend describing your experience in housekeeping or house-repairing, or your difficulties in making some article.

XVI. 29. Compare Hawthorne, Scott, Lee, Goldsmith, and Johnson in their attitude toward financial affairs. Do you recall any others, especially men of letters, who stood the test of financial troubles?

XVII. 30. Read a biography of Fitzgerald and show that his letters reveal "the true inside of him."

XVIII. 31. Compare Dickens's and Arnold's impressions of the United States as recorded in their letters.

32. Note the unusual form of some of Dickens's letters. Compare them with Stevenson's letter to Annie Ide in the form of a will, and Holmes's letter to James T. Fields thanking him for a barometer. Can you recall any other unusual forms?

33. Write a letter, in prose or verse, using some unusual form.

XIX. 34. Compare Lowell's letters with what he says about letter-writing. See "The Letter in Literature" (p. 10).

35. Compare Lowell's experiences as a lecturer with those of Dickens and Arnold.

36. Make the experiment of writing a sonnet, taking a hint from Lowell's to Miss Norton and to James T. Fields.

XX. 37. Note that in the letter of Charles Kingsley's one idea and mood is dominant throughout the whole

letter. Is this true of any other letters in this book? Is this an essential of a good letter?

XXI. 38. What connection do you find between Lewis Carroll's letters and his stories? In what other letters do you find the whimsical tone dominant?

XXII. 39. Lafcadio Hearn, Thackeray, and Eugene Field illustrated the text of their letters with pen-and-ink sketches; Edward Fitzgerald used water-colors. Are there any letters in this volume that lend themselves easily to illustrations?

40. Write a letter and illustrate it with pen-and-ink sketches.

41. Compare Hearn's descriptions of Memphis and New York with Lamb's of London. Describe the impression some city has made on you.

XXIII. 42. What were the social conditions in England in the eighteenth century that led to the development of letter-writing?

43. Trace the development of the modern novel to the eighteenth-century letter. (See Cross's *Development of the Novel.*)

44. Define the memoir, the letter, the journal, and the diary.

45. Make a study of the different methods of transportation of mails, especially the mail-coach of the eighteenth century. Investigate the changes in the price of postage. Swift refers to the "franking" privilege in his *Journal to Stella.* (See Lecky's *History of the Eighteenth Century.*)

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SELECTED LETTERS

I

Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, Marquise de Sévigné (1626–1696), holds a distinguished place in French literature by her letters alone. In them she discussed matters of public as well as private interest, anticipating, to some extent, modern newspapers. Many of her best letters are addressed to her cousin, Phillippe-Emanuel, Marquis de Coulanges (1631–1716). Those written to her daughter, Madame de Grignan, are sufficient in number and interest to give Madame de Sévigné an assured place among letter-writers. She bestowed on her daughter a wealth of affection that has few parallels in literary history.

One of her best known letters describes the famous suicide of the great cook, Vatel, when Louis XIV was the guest of Condé at Chantilly in 1671. Another has for its subject the marriage of Lauzun and Mademoiselle de Montpensier, a romantic princess who sacrificed her throne and high position for a selfish schemer. The refusal of one of Madame de Sévigné's footmen to turn hay-maker affords her material for another delightful letter. Madame de Sévigné's liveliness of expression, powers of keen observation, her relish for all sorts of amusements and diversions, her warm sympathy, her interest in people, all combined to make her "queen of letter-writers."

1. *Madame de Sévigné to M. de Coulanges*

Paris, December 15, 1670

I am going to tell you the most startling, surprising, wonderful, miraculous, fascinating, overwhelming, un-

heard of, unique, extraordinary, incredible and unexpected piece of news; it is of the greatest importance and at the same time of the least; it is the most unusual and also the commonest; it is the most striking and until to-day the most secret thing, as well as the most brilliant and enviable; now if we cannot believe this thing, how can it gain credence in Lyons? It is a thing which makes everybody exclaim with wonder,—in short, a thing which is to take place Sunday, when those who see it will think they have lost their senses; a thing which, although it will take place Sunday, perhaps will not be finished on Monday! I cannot make up my mind to tell you; you must guess what it is and I give you three trials. You give it up?

Well, then I must tell you. Monsieur de Lauzun is to marry next Sunday at the Louvre,[1] guess whom? I give you four, ten, a hundred trials. Madame de Coulanges says: "It is really very hard to guess; perhaps it is Madame de la Vallière." Indeed, Madame, it is not. "It is Mademoiselle de Retz, then." No, nor she neither; you are extremely provincial. "Ah," you say, "we are certainly stupid. It is Mademoiselle de Colbert instead." Wide the mark! "Surely then, it is Mademoiselle de Crequy." You are not there yet. I shall have to tell you after all. He is to marry, Sunday, at the Louvre, with the King's[2] permission, Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle de ——, Mademoiselle —— guess her name. He is to marry Mademoiselle, the great Mademoiselle; Mademoiselle, daughter to the late Monsieur; Mademoiselle, granddaughter of

Henry IV; Mademoiselle d'Eu, Mademoiselle de Dombs, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, Mademoiselle d'Orleans, Mademoiselle, the King's first cousin, Mademoiselle, destined to the throne, Mademoiselle, the only match in France that was worthy of Monsieur. What a choice bit of gossip! If you cry out, if you are beside yourself, if you say that we have told you a lie, that the thing is false, that we are making sport of you, that it is a pretty jest without rhyme or reason; if, in short, you abuse us, we shall think you have the right, for we have done just the same things ourselves. Farewell, the letters which you will receive by this post will inform you whether we are telling you the truth or not.

2. *Madame de Sévigné to Madame de Grignan*

PARIS, Sunday, April 26, 1671

This is not a letter, but an account which Moreuil has just given me of what happened at Chantilly concerning Vatel. I wrote to you on Friday that he had stabbed himself: this is the story in detail:— The king arrived on Thursday evening. The hunt, the lanterns, the moonlight, the promenading, the collation in a garden of jonquils—all was everything that could be desired. Supper came; the joint failed at one or two tables on account of some unexpected diners. This upset Vatel. He said several times, "My honour is lost; this is a disgrace that I cannot endure." He said to Gourville,[1] "My head fails me; I have not slept for twelve nights. Help me to give my orders." Gourville

consoled him as best he could. The joint which had failed, not at the king's table, but at the 25th table, haunted his mind. Gourville told Monsieur le Prince. Monsieur le Prince went up to him in his room and said, "Vatel, all is well; there never was anything so beautiful as the king's supper." He answered, "Monseigneur, your goodness overwhelms me. I know the joint failed at two tables." "Nothing of the sort," said Monsieur le Prince; "do not disturb yourself,—all is well."

Midnight comes: the fireworks do not succeed; a cloud overspread them; they cost sixteen thousand francs. At four o'clock in the morning Vatel wanders about all over the place: everything is asleep. He meets a small purveyor with two loads of fish. He asks him, "Is this all?" "Yes, sir." The man did not know that Vatel had sent to all the seaport towns in France. They wait for some time; the other purveyors do not arrive. He grows excited; he thinks that no more fish will arrive. He finds Gourville, and says to him, "Sir, I shall not be able to survive this disgrace. My honour and reputation are at stake." Gourville only laughed at him. Then Vatel goes up to his own room, puts his sword against the door, and runs it through his heart—it was the third thrust, for he gave himself two wounds which were not mortal. He falls down quite dead. Meanwhile the fish is coming in from every side; people are seeking for Vatel to distribute it; they reach his room, they clamour, they burst open the door they find him lying bathed in his blood. Monsieur

le Prince is hurriedly summoned; he is in utter despair. Monsieur le Duc burst into tears; it was upon Vatel that his whole journey to Burgundy depended. Monsieur le Prince told the king, very sadly, "It was said to be the excess of his own code of honour." They praised him; they praised and they blamed his courage. The king said that for five years he had delayed his coming, because he knew the extreme trouble his visit would cause.

But it was too late for poor Vatel. Gourville, however, tried to repair the loss of Vatel, and the loss of Vatel was repaired. The dinner was excellent, so was the luncheon. They supped, they walked, there were games, there was hunting, the scent of jonquils was everywhere; it was an enchanted scene.

3. *Madame de Sévigné to M. de Coulanges*

LES ROCHERS, July 22, 1671

This word is over and above my fortnightly letter, my dear Cousin, to inform you that you will soon have the honour of receiving Picard; and as he is the brother of Madame de Coulanges' valet, I am glad to let you know what my measures concerning him have been. You know that Madame de Chaulnes [1] is at Vitré: she is there awaiting her husband, the Duke, who arrives in ten or twelve days for the opening of the Brittany Chambers.[2] You think that I am wandering: she is there awaiting her husband and all the Chambers, and, meanwhile, she is at Vitré all alone, dying of dulness.

You cannot understand how this will ever lead to Picard. She is there dying of dulness. I am her only consolation.

All this is very roundabout, but nevertheless we shall soon reach the point. As I am her only consolation, after having paid her a visit, she must come to me, and I want her to find my lawns neat and my alleys neat—those great alleys which you love. But still you don't understand where this is leading. Here is another little circumstance relating to it. You know this is haymaking time: I had no labourers, so I am obliged to send to that meadow which the poets have praised, to fetch all those working there to come and clean up here (you still see no point), and in their place I send all my people to *faner*. Do you know what to *faner* means? I must explain: to *faner* is the prettiest thing in the world. It is to turn hay over and over whilst gamboling in a meadow; if one can do this much, one can *faner*.

All my people went off gaily: Picard alone came to tell me he wouldn't go,—that he hadn't entered my service for this,—that it was not his business, and that he preferred going back to Paris. Upon my word my wrath rose. I reflected that this was the hundredth time he had offended me,—that he had no heart, nor feeling; in a word, the measure was overflowing. I took him at his word, and in spite of all that was said for him, I remained as firm as a rock and he is gone. It is true justice to treat people according to their services, good or bad. If you see him again, don't

receive him, don't protect him, don't blame me; and remember that he is the fellow in all the world who least likes haymaking, and is the most unworthy of being well treated. This is the story in a few words. For my part I like narratives in which one is told only what is necessary without any straying either to the right or the left, or going back to the beginning of things. In short, to speak without any vanity, I think you have here a model of a pleasant narrative.

I am cross to-day, my child; I am as when you used to say, "You are cross;" I am sad, I have no news of you. A great friendship is never tranquil; it rains, we are alone; in a word, I wish you more joy than I have to-day.

II

In 1699 Joseph Addison (1672–1719) obtained a pension of £300 a year, to enable him "to travel and qualify himself to serve his Majesty." He possessed many of the best characteristics of the eighteenth-century man of letters—grace, charm, ease, polish, and adequacy of expression. He was on confidential terms with diplomatists, and a member of the famous Kit-Cat Club. His literary fame, as well as that of Steele, rests on his contributions to *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. The following letter is a good example of the graceful English of which Addison was master.

Joseph Addison to Chamberlain Dashwood

Geneva, July, 1702

Dear Sir,—

About three days ago Mr. Bocher put a very pretty snuffbox in my hand. I was not a little pleas'd to hear that it belonged to myself, and was much more so when I found it was a present from a gentleman that I have so great an honour for. You did not probably foresee that it would draw on you the trouble of a letter, but you must blame yourself for it. For my part I can no more accept of a snuffbox without returning my acknowledgments, than I can take snuff without sneezing after it. This last I must own to you is so great an absurdity that I should be ashamed to confess it, were not I in hopes of correcting it very speedily. I am observ'd to have my box oft'ner in my hand than those

that have been used to one these twenty years, for I can't forbear taking it out of my pocket whenever I think of Mr. Dashwood. You know Mr. Bays recommends snuff as a great provocative to wit, but you may produce this letter as a standing evidence against him. I have since the beginning of it taken above a dozen pinches, and still find myself much more inclin'd to sneeze than to jest. From whence I conclude that wit and tobacco are not inseparable, or to make a pun of it, tho' a man may be master of a snuffbox,

Non cuicunque datum est habere Nasam.[1]

I should be afraid of being thought a pedant for my quotation did I not know that the gentleman I am writing to always carries a Horace in his pocket. But whatever you may think me, pray, Sir, do me the justice to esteem me

Your most &c.

III

Richard Steele (1672–1729) was a warm-hearted, impulsive Irishman, who in his contributions to *The Tatler* and to *The Spectator* lifted journalistic writing into the realm of literature. He was excellently adapted by nature and experience to be the complement of Addison. His second wife was Mrs. Mary Scurlock, the "dear Prue" of his letters.

1. *Richard Steele to Mary Scurlock*

September 1, 1707

Madam,

It is the hardest thing in the world to be in love, and yet attend to business. As for me, all who speak to me find me out, and I must lock myself up, or other people will do it for me.

A gentleman asked me this morning, "What news from Lisbon?" and I answered, "She is exquisitely handsome." Another desired to know when I had been last at Hampton Court. I replied, "I will be on Tuesday come se'ennight." Pr'ythe, allow me at least to kiss your hand before that day, that my mind may be in some composure. Oh love!

> A thousand torments dwell about thee,
> Yet who would live, to live without thee?

Methinks I could write a volume to you; but all the language on earth would fail in saying how much, and with what disinterested passion,

I am ever yours,

Rich. Steele

2. *Richard Steele to Mrs. Steele*

DEVIL TAVERN, TEMPLE-BAR,
Jan. 3, 1708

DEAR PRUE,

I have partly succeeded in my business to-day, and enclose two guineas as earnest of more. Dear Prue, I cannot come home to dinner. I languish for your welfare and will never be a moment careless more.

Your faithful husband,
RICH. STEELE

Send me word you have received this.

IV

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762), known chiefly for her letters, wrote in a dignified fashion, devoid of the spontaneity that usually characterizes a great letter-writer. Perhaps the fact that she anticipated that her letters would be published explains why they are more like essays than familiar letters. Her husband, Edward Wortley Montagu, was appointed ambassador at Constantinople in 1716, and Lady Mary accompanied him to Vienna, and thence to Adrianople and Constantinople. Her letters to Pope, and to the Countess of Mar, a favorite sister, and to Horace Walpole are full of graphic descriptions of eastern life. In Turkey, she became acquainted with the practice of inoculation for small-pox and had her own children inoculated.

1. *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to Miss Sarah Chiswell*

Adrianople, April 1, 1717

In my opinion, dear S., I ought rather to quarrel with you for not answering my Nimeguen [1] letter of August till December, than to excuse my not writing again till now. I am sure there is on my side a very good excuse for silence, having gone such tiresome land-journeys, though I don't find the conclusion of them so bad as you seem to imagine. I am very easy here, and not in the solitude you fancy me. The great quantity of Greek, French, English, and Italians, that are under our protection, make their court to me from morning till night; and, I'll assure you, are many of them very fine ladies; for there is no possibility for a

Christian to live easily under this government but by the protection of an embassador—and the richer they are, the greater their danger.

Those dreadful stories you have heard of the plague have very little foundation in truth. I own I have much ado to reconcile myself to the sound of a word which has always given me such terrible ideas, though I am convinced there is little more in it than a fever. As a proof of which, we passed through two or three towns most violently infected. In the very next house where we lay (in one of those places) two persons died of it. Luckily for me, I was so well deceived that I knew nothing of the matter; and I was made believe, that our second cook who fell ill here had only a great cold. However, we left our doctor to take care of him, and yesterday they both arrived here in good health; and I am now let into the secret that he has had the plague. There are many that escape it; neither is the air ever infected. I am persuaded it would be as easy to root it out here as out of Italy and France; but it does so little mischief, they are not very solicitous about it, and are content to suffer this distemper instead of our variety, which they are utterly unacquainted with.

Apropos of distempers, I am going to tell you a thing that I am sure will make you wish yourself here. The small-pox, so fatal, and so general amongst us, is here entirely harmless by the invention of ingrafting, which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women who make it their business to perform the operation every autumn, in the month of September,

when the great heat is abated. People send to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the small-pox: they make parties for this purpose, and when they are met (commonly fifteen or sixteen together), the old woman comes with a nut-shell full of the matter of the best sort of small-pox, and asks what veins you please to have opened. She immediately rips open that you offer to her with a large needle (which gives you no more pain than a common scratch), and puts into the vein as much venom as can lie upon the head of her needle, and after binds up the little wound with a hollow bit of shell; and in this manner opens four or five veins. The Grecians have commonly the superstition of opening one in the middle of the forehead, in each arm, and on the breast, to mark the sign of the cross; but this has a very ill effect, all these wounds leaving little scars, and is not done by those that are not superstitious, who choose to have them in the legs, or that part of the arm that is concealed.

The children or young patients play together all the rest of the day, and are in perfect health to the eighth. Then the fever begins to seize them, and they keep their beds two days, very seldom three. They have very rarely above twenty or thirty in their faces, which never mark; and in eight days' time they are as well as before their illness. Where they are wounded, there remain running sores during the distemper, which I don't doubt is a great relief to it. Every year thousands undergo this operation: and the French embassador says pleasantly, that they take the small-pox here by

way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died in it; and you may believe I am very well satisfied of the safety of the experiment, since I intend to try it on my dear little son.

I am patriot enough to take pains to bring this useful invention into fashion in England; and I should not fail to write to some of our doctors very particularly about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to destroy such a considerable branch of their revenue for the good of mankind. But that distemper is too beneficial to them not to expose to all their resentment the hardy wight that should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps, if I live to return, I may, however, have courage to war with them. Upon this occasion admire the heroism in the heart of your friend, &c.

2. *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Countess of Mar*

ADRIANOPLE, April 18, 1717

I wrote to you, dear sister, and all my other English correspondents, by the last ship, and only Heaven can tell when I shall have another opportunity of sending to you; but I cannot forbear writing, though perhaps my letter may lie upon my hands this two months. To confess the truth, my head is so full of my entertainment yesterday, that 'tis absolutely necessary for my own repose to give it some vent. Without farther preface, I will then begin my story.

I was invited to dine with the Grand Vizier's[1] lady, and it was with a great deal of pleasure I prepared myself for an entertainment which was never given before to any Christian. I thought I should very little satisfy her curiosity (which I did not doubt was a considerable motive to the invitation) by going in a dress she was used to see, and therefore dressed myself in the court habit of Vienna, which is much more magnificent than ours. However, I chose to go *incognita*, to avoid any disputes about ceremony, and went in a Turkish coach, only attended by my woman that held up my train, and the Greek lady who was my interpretress. I was met at the court door by her black eunuch, who helped me out of the coach with great respect, and conducted me through several rooms, where her she-slaves, finely dressed, were ranged on each side.

In the innermost I found the lady sitting on her sofa, in a sable vest. She advanced to meet me, and presented me half a dozen of her friends with great civility. She seemed a very good woman, near fifty years old. I was surprised to observe so little magnificence in her house, the furniture being all very moderate; and, except the habits and number of her slaves, nothing about her that appeared expensive. She guessed at my thoughts, and told me that she was no longer of an age to spend either her time or money in superfluities; that her whole expense was in charity, and her whole employment praying to God. There was no affectation in this speech; both she and her husband are entirely given up to devotion. He never looks upon any other

woman; and, what is much more extraordinary, touches no bribes, notwithstanding the example of all his predecessors. He is so scrupulous in this point, that he would not accept Mr. W——'s present, till he had been assured over and over that it was a settled perquisite of his place at the entrance of every embassador.

She entertained me with all kind of civility till dinner came in, which was served, one dish at a time, to a vast number, all finely dressed after their manner, which I do not think so bad as you have perhaps heard it represented. I am a very good judge of their eating, having lived three weeks in the house of an *effendi* [1] at Belgrade, who gave us very magnificent dinners, dressed by his own cooks, which the first week pleased me extremely; but I own I then began to grow weary of it, and desired our own cook might add a dish or two after our manner. But I attribute this to custom. I am very much inclined to believe an Indian, that had never tasted of either, would prefer their cookery to ours. Their sauces are very high, all the roast very much done. They use a great deal of rich spice. The soup is served for the last dish; and they have at least as great variety of ragouts as we have. I was very sorry I could not eat of as many as the good lady would have had me, who was very earnest in serving me of every thing.

The treat concluded with coffee and perfumes, which is a high mark of respect; two slaves kneeling censed my hair, clothes, and handkerchief. After this ceremony, she commanded her slaves to play and dance,

which they did with their guitars in their hands; and she excused to me their want of skill, saying she took no care to accomplish them in that art.

I returned her thanks, and soon after took my leave. I was conducted back in the same manner I entered; and would have gone straight to my own house; but the Greek lady with me earnestly solicited me to visit the *kiyâya's* [1] lady, saying, he was the second officer in the empire, and ought indeed to be looked upon as the first, the Grand Vizier having only the name, while he exercised the authority. I had found so little diversion in this harem, that I had no mind to go to another. But her importunity prevailed with me, and I am extremely glad that I was so complaisant.

All things here were with quite another air than at the Grand Vizier's; and the very house confessed the difference between an old devotee and a young beauty. It was nicely clean and magnificent. I was met at the door by two black eunuchs, who led me through a long gallery between two ranks of beautiful young girls, with their hair finely plaited, almost hanging to their feet, all dressed in fine light damasks, brocaded with silver. I was sorry that decency did not permit me to stop to consider them nearer.

But that thought was lost upon my entrance into a large room, or rather pavilion, built round with gilded sashes, which were most of them thrown up, and the trees planted near them gave an agreeable shade, which hindered the sun from being troublesome. The jessamines and honeysuckles that twisted round their

trunks, shedding a soft perfume, increased by a white marble fountain playing sweet water in the lower part of the room, which fell into three or four basins with a pleasing sound. The roof was painted with all sorts of flowers, falling out of gilded baskets, that seemed tumbling down. On a sofa, raised three steps, and covered with fine Persian carpets, sat the *kiyâya's* lady, leaning on cushions of white satin, embroidered; and at her feet sat two young girls, the eldest about twelve years old, lovely as angels, dressed perfectly rich, and almost covered with jewels.

But they were hardly seen near the fair *Fatima* (for that is her name), so much her beauty effaced every thing. I have seen all that has been called lovely either in England or Germany, and must own that I never saw any thing so gloriously beautiful, nor can I recollect a face that would have been taken notice of near hers. She stood up to receive me, saluting me after their fashion, putting her hand upon her heart with a sweetness full of majesty, that no court breeding could ever give. She ordered cushions to be given to me, and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honour. I confess, though the Greek lady had before given me a great opinion of her beauty, I was so struck with admiration, that I could not for some time speak to her, being wholly taken up in gazing. That surprising harmony of features, that charming result of the whole, that exact proportion of body, that lovely bloom of complexion unsullied by art, the unutterable enchantment of her smile—But her eyes,—large and

black, with all the soft languishment of the blue, every turn of her face discovering some new charm.

After my first surprise was over, I endeavoured, by nicely examining her face, to find out some imperfection, without any fruit of my search, but being clearly convinced of the error of that vulgar notion, that a face perfectly regular would not be agreeable; nature having done for her with more success, what Apelles [1] is said to have essayed, by a collection of the most exact features, to form a perfect face, and to that, a behaviour, so full of grace and sweetness, such easy motions, with an air so majestic, yet free from stiffness or affectation, that I am persuaded, could she be suddenly transported upon the most polite throne of Europe, nobody would think her other than born and bred to be a queen, though educated in a country we call barbarous. To say all in a word, our most celebrated English beauties would vanish near her.

She told me the two girls at her feet were her daughters, though she appeared too young to be their mother. Her fair maids were ranged below the sofa, to the number of twenty, and put me in mind of the pictures of the ancient nymphs. I did not think all nature could have furnished such a scene of beauty. She made them a sign to play and dance. Four of them immediately began to play some soft airs on instruments between a lute and a guitar, which they accompanied with their voices, while the others danced by turns. This dance was very different from what I had seen before. Nothing could be more artful,—the tunes so soft—the motion

so languishing—accompanied with pauses and dying eyes, half-falling back, and then recovering themselves in so artful a manner.

I suppose you may have read that the Turks have no music but what is shocking to the ears; but this account is from those who never heard any but what is played in the streets. I can assure you that the music is extremely pathetic; 'tis true I am inclined to prefer the Italian, but perhaps I am partial. I am acquainted with a Greek lady who sings better than Mrs. Robinson, and is very well skilled in both, who gives the preference to the Turkish. 'Tis certain they have very natural voices: these were very agreeable. When the dance was over, four fair slaves came into the room with silver censers in their hands, and perfumed the air with amber, aloes-wood, and other rich scents. After this they served me coffee upon their knees in the finest Japan china, with *soucoupes* [1] of silver, gilt. The lovely Fatima entertained me all this time in the most polite agreeable manner, calling me often *Guzél sultanum*, or the beautiful sultana, and desiring my friendship with the best grace in the world, lamenting that she could not entertain me in my own language.

When I took my leave, two maids brought in a fine silver basket of embroidered handkerchiefs; she begged I would wear the richest for her sake, and gave the others to my woman and interpretress. I retired through the same ceremonies as before, and could not help fancying I had been some time in Mahomet's

paradise, so much I was charmed with what I had seen. I know not how the relation of it appears to you. I wish it may give you part of my pleasure; for I would have my dear sister share in all the diversion of

Yours, &c.

V

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, fourth Earl of Chesterfield (1694–1773), was a politician, statesman, and essayist, but his literary fame rests chiefly on his *Letters to his Son*, written to Philip Stanhope. The letters are full of worldly wisdom, keen wit, advice, and instruction. In spite of the care bestowed on his education, the son did not fulfill his father's expectation. Chesterfield was selfish and calculating. He wanted to be known as a patron of letters, yet he so offended Samuel Johnson as to provoke from the doctor the famous letter in defense of men of letters. In 1747 Johnson had sent Chesterfield, who was then Secretary of State, a prospectus of his Dictionary, which was acknowledged by a subscription of £10. Chesterfield remained indifferent, until the book appeared, when he wrote his papers in the *World* in praise of it, whereupon Johnson replied with a letter, famous for its sturdiness, independence, and candor.

The Earl of Chesterfield to his Son, Philip Stanhope, Esq.

LONDON: November 24, 1747

DEAR BOY,—

As often as I write to you (and that you know is pretty often) so often I am in doubt whether it is to any purpose, and whether it is not labour and paper lost. This entirely depends upon the degree of reason and reflection which you are master of, or think proper to exert. If you give yourself time to think, and have sense enough to think right, two reflections must necessarily occur to you; the one is, that I have a great deal

of experience and that you have none; the other is, that I am the only man living who cannot have, directly or indirectly, any interest concerning you, but your own. From which two undeniable principles, the obvious and necessary conclusion is, that you ought, for your own sake, to attend to and follow my advice.

If, by the application which I recommend to you, you acquire great knowledge, you alone are the gainer; I pay for it. If you should deserve either a good or a bad character, mine will be exactly what it is now, and will neither be the better in the first case, nor the worse in the latter. You alone will be the gainer or the loser.

Whatever your pleasures may be, I neither can nor shall envy you them, as old people are sometimes suspected by young people to do; and I shall only lament, if they should prove such as are unbecoming a man of honour, or below a man of sense; but you will be the real sufferer, if they are such. As therefore it is plain that I have no other motive than that of affection in whatever I say to you, you ought to look upon me as your best and, for some years to come, your only friend.

True friendship requires certain proportions of age and manners, and can never subsist where they are extremely different, except in the relations of parent and child; where affection on one side, and regard on the other, make up the difference. The friendship which you may contract with people of your own age, may be sincere, may be warm; but must be, for some time, reciprocally unprofitable, as there can be no experience on either side.

The young leading the young, is like the blind leading the blind: "they will both fall into the ditch." The only sure guide is he who has often gone the road which you want to go. Let me be that guide, who have gone all roads, and who can consequently point out to you the best. If you ask me why I went any of the bad roads myself, I will answer you very truly, that it was for want of a good guide: ill-example invited me one way, and a good guide was wanting to show me a better. But if anybody, capable of advising me, had taken the same pains with me, which I have taken, and will continue to take with you, I should have avoided many follies and inconveniences, which undirected youth ran me into. My father was neither desirous nor able to advise me, which is what, I hope, you cannot say of yours. You see that I make use only of the word *advise;* because I would much rather have the assent of your reason to my advice, than the submission of your will to my authority. This, I persuade myself, will happen, from that degree of sense which I think you have; and therefore I will go on advising, and with hopes of success.

You are now settled for some time at Leipsic: the principal object of your stay there is the knowledge of books and sciences; which if you do not, by attention and application, make yourself master of while you are there, you will be ignorant of them all the rest of your life: and take my word for it, a life of ignorance is not only a very contemptible, but a very tiresome one. Redouble your attention then, to Mr. Harte, in your

private studies of the *Literæ Humaniores,*[1] especially Greek. State your difficulties, whenever you have any; and do not suppress them, either from mistaken shame, lazy indifference, or in order to have done the sooner. When you are at lectures with Professor Mascow, or any other professor, let nothing pass till you are sure that you understand it thoroughly; and accustom yourself to write down the capital points of what you learn.

When you have thus usefully employed your mornings, you may with a safe conscience divert yourself in the evenings, and make those evenings very useful too, by passing them in good company, and, by observation and attention, learning as much of the world as Leipsic can teach you. You will observe and imitate the manners of the people of the best fashion there; not that they are (it may be) the best manners in the world; but because they are the best manners of the place where you are, to which a man of sense always conforms. The nature of things, as I have often told you, is always and everywhere the same; but the modes of them vary, more or less, in every country; and an easy and genteel conformity to them, or rather the assuming of them at proper times and in proper places, is what particularly constitutes a man of the world, and a well-bred man.

Here is advice enough, I think, and too much, it may be, you will think, for one letter; if you follow it, you will get knowledge, character, and pleasure by it; if you do not, I only lose *operam et oleum,*[2] which, in all events, I do not grudge you.

I send you, by a person who sets out this day for

Leipsic, a small packet from your mamma, containing some valuable things which you left behind. I have sent you the Greek roots, lately translated into English from the French of the Port Royal.[1] Inform yourself what the Port Royal is. To conclude with a quibble: I hope you will not only feed upon these Greek roots, but likewise digest them perfectly. Adieu!

VI

SAMUEL JOHNSON, (1709–1784), known as the great lexicographer, struggled with poverty, hoping in vain for the patronage of Lord Chesterfield. For a quarter of a century he was the central figure in English literature; he found the best outlet for his thought in brilliant conversation. One of the brightest spots in his life was his intimacy with Dr. and Mrs. Thrale, who received him into their home in Southwark and ministered to his comfort for sixteen years. Many interesting letters to Mrs. Thrale testify to this friendship.

Dr. Samuel Johnson to the Earl of Chesterfield

February 7, 1755

MY LORD,

I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of the *World*, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*,[1] that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged that

neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a Patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be dis-

appointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most humble,
Most obedient servant,
SAM. JOHNSON

VII

James Boswell (1740–1795) was the biographer of Samuel Johnson. Some one asked, "Who is this Scotch cur at Johnson's heels?" "He is not a cur," replied Goldsmith, "he is only a burr. Tom Davies[1] flung him at Johnson in sport and he has the faculty of sticking." When Boswell began to "Boswellize," he was twenty-three and Johnson was fifty-four. Johnson liked to talk and Boswell delighted in eliciting and recording conversation. So the two were not ill-assorted. Boswell was admitted to the famous Literary Club, which numbered among its members Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Reynolds, and Goldsmith. The following letter describes Johnson's visit to the Boswells in Ayrshire in 1773.

James Boswell to David Garrick

Inverness: August 29, 1773

My Dear Sir,—

Here I am, and Mr. Samuel Johnson actually with me. We were a night at Fores, in coming to which, in the dusk of the evening, we passed over the black and blasted heath where Macbeth met the witches. Your old preceptor repeated, with much solemnity, the speech, "How far is't called to Fores?[2] What are these, so withered and so wild in their attire."

This day we visited the ruins of Macbeth's castle at Inverness. I have had great romantic satisfaction in seeing Johnson upon the classical scenes of Shakespeare in Scotland; which I really looked upon as almost as improbable as that "Birnam Wood should come to

Dunsinane." Indeed, as I have always been accustomed to view him as a permanent London object, it would not be much more wonderful to me to see St. Paul's church moving along where we now are. As yet we have travelled in post-chaises; but to-morrow we are to mount on horseback, and ascend into the mountains by Fort Augustus, and so on to the ferry, where we are to cross to Skye. We shall see that island fully, and then visit some more of the Hebrides; after which we are to land in Argyleshire, proceed by Glasgow to Auchinleck, repose there a competent time, and then return to Edinburgh, from whence the Rambler [1] will depart for old England again, as soon as he finds it convenient.

Hitherto we have had a very prosperous expedition. He is in excellent spirits, and I have a rich journal of his conversation. Look back, Davy, to Lichfield; run up through the time which has elapsed since you first knew Mr. Johnson, and enjoy with me his present extraordinary tour. I could not resist the impulse of writing to you from this place. The situation of the old castle corresponds exactly to Shakespeare's description. While we were there to-day, it happened oddly that a raven perched upon one of the chimney-tops, and croaked. Then I in my turn repeated—

> The raven himself is hoarse,
> That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
> Under my battlements.[2]

I wish you had been with us. Think what an enthusiastic happiness I shall have to see Mr. Samuel Johnson

walking among the romantic rocks and woods of my ancestors at Auchinleck. Write to me at Edinburgh. I offer my very best compliments to Mrs. Garrick, and ever am your warm admirer and friend,

JAMES BOSWELL

VIII

The following letters reveal many characteristics of Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774). He was generous, sympathetic, vain of his personal appearance, and wholly unable to adjust his income to his expenses. His uncle, Thomas Contarine, was a loyal friend and supplied the necessary funds for the trip to Leyden and Paris in 1753, where Goldsmith studied medicine, according to his own accounts. In December, 1758, Goldsmith was examined at Surgeon's Hall for a certificate as hospital mate. In order to make a decent appearance before his examiners, he had borrowed a suit of clothes from Griffiths, the bookseller, but was driven to pawn the clothes and was suspected by Griffiths of pawning some books, also. Griffiths' letter provoked a characteristic outburst. One of the brightest spots in Goldsmith's checkered life was his association with Miss Mary Horneck, the "Jessamy Bride," for whom, no doubt, he cherished a warm regard. One of the following letters was written to her sister, Mrs. Bunbury, who was Miss Catherine Horneck.

1. *Oliver Goldsmith to Robert Bryanton, at Ballymahon, Ireland*

Edinburgh, September 26th, 1753

My Dear Bob,

How many good excuses (and you know I was ever good at an excuse) might I call up to vindicate my past shameful silence. I might tell how I wrote a long letter on my first coming hither, and seem vastly angry at my not receiving an answer; I might allege that business (with business you know I was always pestered) had never given me time to finger a pen. But

I suppress those and twenty more as plausible, and as easily invented, since they might be attended with a slight inconvenience of being known to be lies. Let me then speak truth. An hereditary indolence (I have it from the mother's side) has hitherto prevented my writing to you, and still prevents my writing at least twenty-five letters more, due to my friends in Ireland. No turn-spit-dog gets up into his wheel with more reluctance than I sit down to write; yet no dog ever loved the roast meat he turns better than I do him I now address.

Yet what shall I say now I am entered? Shall I tire you with a description of this unfruitful country; where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarcely able to feed a rabbit? Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil. Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape. No grove, nor brook, lend their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty. Yet with all these disadvantages to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive. The poor have pride ever ready to relieve them. If mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration; and that they can plentifully bestow upon themselves.

From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this country enjoys; namely, the gentlemen here are much better bred than among us. No such character here as our fox-hunters; and they have expressed great surprise when I informed them, that some

men in Ireland of one thousand pounds a year, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, and drinking to be drunk. Truly if such a being, equipped in his hunting dress, came among a circle of Scotch gentry, they would behold him with the same astonishment that a countryman does King George on horseback.

The men here have generally high cheek bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular. Now that I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing-halls, he sees one end of the room taken up by the ladies, who sit dismally in a group by themselves;—in the other end stand their pensive partners that are to be;—but no more intercourse between the sexes than there is between two countries at war. The ladies indeed may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady directress pitches upon a lady and gentleman to walk a minuet; which they perform with a formality that approaches to despondence. After five or six couples have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country dances; each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady directress; so they dance much, say nothing, and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the ancient procession of the Roman matrons in honor of Ceres; [1] and the Scotch gentleman told me, (and, faith I believe he was right,) that I was a very great pedant for my pains.

Now I am come to the ladies; and to show that I love Scotland, and everything that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it—that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times finer and handsomer than the Irish. To be sure, now, I see your sisters Patty and Peggy vastly surprised at my partiality,—but tell them flatly, I don't value them—or their fine skins, or eyes, or good sense, a potato; for I say, and will maintain it; and as a convincing proof (I am in a great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies say it themselves. But to be less serious; where will you find a language so prettily become a pretty mouth as the broad Scotch? And the women here speak it in its highest purity; for instance, teach one of your young ladies at home to pronounce the "Whoar wull I gong?" with a becoming widening of mouth, and I'll lay my life they'll wound every hearer.

We have no such character here as a coquet, but alas! how many envious prudes! Some days ago I walked into my Lord Kilcoubry's (don't be surprised, my lord is but a glover), when the Duchess of Hamilton (that fair who sacrificed her beauty to her ambition, and her inward peace to a title and gilt equipage) passed by in her chariot; her battered husband, or more properly the guardian of her charms, sat by her side. Straight envy began, in the shape of no less than three ladies who sat with me, to find faults in her faultless form. "For my part," says the first, "I think what I always thought, that the Duchess has too much of the red in her complexion." "Madam, I am of your opin-

ion," says the second; "I think her face has a palish cast too much on the delicate order." "And, let me tell you," added the third lady, whose mouth was puckered up to the size of an issue, "that the Duchess has fine lips, but she wants a mouth." At this every lady drew up her mouth as if going to pronounce the letter P.

But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women with whom I have scarcely any correspondence! There are, 'tis certain, handsome women here; and 'tis certain they have handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and poor man is society only for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances, and nature a person to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings, while I may sit down and laugh at the world and at myself, the most ridiculous object in it. But you see I am grown downright splenetic, and perhaps the fit may continue till I receive an answer to this. I know you cannot send me much news from Ballymahon, but such as it is, send it all; every thing you send will be agreeable to me.

Has George Conway put up a sign yet; or John Finecly left off drinking drams; or Tom Allen got a new wig? But I leave you to your own choice what to write. While I live, know you have a true friend in yours, &c. &c. &c.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

P. S. Give my sincere respects (not compliments, do you mind) to your agreeable family, and give my

service to my mother, if you see her; for, as you express it in Ireland, I have a sneaking kindness for her still. Direct to me,——, Student in Physic, in Edinburgh.

2. *Oliver Goldsmith to the Rev. Thomas Contarine*

LEYDEN, April [or May], 1754

DEAR SIR,—

I suppose by this time I am accused of either neglect or ingratitude, and my silence imputed to my usual slowness of writing. But believe me, sir, when I say that till now I had not an opportunity of sitting down with that ease of mind which writing required. You may see by the top of the letter that I am at Leyden; but of my journey hither you must be informed.

Some time after the receipt of your last I embarked for Bordeaux on board a Scotch ship called the St. Andrew's, Capt. John Wall, master. The ship made a tolerable appearance, and, as another inducement, I was let to know that six agreeable passengers were to be my company. Well, we were but two days at sea when a storm drove us into a city of England called Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We all went ashore to refresh us after the fatigue of our voyage. Seven men and I were one day on shore, and on the following evening, as we were all merry, the room door bursts open, enters a sergeant and twelve grenadiers, with their bayonets screwed, and puts us all under the King's arrest. It seems my company were Scotchmen in the French service, and had been in Scotland to enlist

soldiers for the French army. I endeavoured all I could to prove my innocence; however, I remained in prison with the rest a fortnight, and with difficulty got off even then. Dear sir, keep this all a secret, or at least say it was for debt; for if it were once known at the university I should hardly get a degree.

But hear how Providence interposed in my favour: the ship was gone on to Bordeaux before I got from prison, and was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, and every one of the crew were drowned. It happened the last great storm. There was a ship at that time ready for Holland: I embarked, and in nine days, thank my God, I arrived safe at Rotterdam; whence I travelled by land to Leyden; and whence I now write.

You may expect some account of this country, and though I am not well qualified for such an undertaking, yet shall I endeavour to satisfy some part of your expectations. Nothing surprised me more than the books every day published, descriptive of the manners of this country. Any young man who takes it into his head to publish his travels visits the countries he intends to describe; passes through them with as much inattention as his valet de chambre; and consequently, not having a fund himself to fill a volume, he applies to those who wrote before him, and gives us the manners of a country, not as he must have seen them, but such as they might have been fifty years before.

The modern Dutchman is quite a different creature from him of former times: he in everything imitates a Frenchman, but in his easy, disengaged air, which is

the result of keeping polite company. The Dutchman is vastly ceremonious, and is perhaps exactly what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better bred. But the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature: upon a head of lank hair he wears a half-cocked, narrow hat laced with black ribbon; no coat, but seven waist-coats, and nine pairs of breeches; so that his hips reach almost up to his armpits. This well clothed vegetable is now fit to see company or make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite? Why, she wears a large fur cap, with a deal of Flanders lace: and for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats.

A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove with coals in it, which, when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats; and at this chimney dozing Strephon [1] lights his pipe. A Dutch woman and Scotch will well bear an opposition. The one is pale and fat, the other lean and ruddy; the one walks as if she were straddling after a go-cart, and the other takes too masculine a stride. I shall not endeavour to deprive either country of its share of beauty; but must say, that of all objects on this earth an English farmer's daughter is most charming. Every woman there is a complete beauty, while the higher class of women want many of the requisites to make them even tolerable.

Their pleasures here are very dull though very various. You may smoke, you may doze, you may go to

the Italian comedy, as good an amusement as either of the former. This entertainment always brings in Harlequin, who is generally a magician, and in consequence of his diabolical art performs a thousand tricks on the rest of the persons of the drama, who are all fools. I have seen the pit in a roar of laughter at this humour when with his sword he touches the glass from which another was drinking. 'Twas not his face they laughed at, for that was masked. They must have seen something vastly queer in the wooden sword that neither I nor you, sir, were you there, could see.

In winter, when their canals are frozen, every house is forsaken, and all people are on the ice; sleds drawn by horses, and skating, are at that time the reigning amusements. They have boats here that slide on the ice, and are driven by the winds. When they spread all their sails they go more than a mile and a half a minute, and their motion is so rapid the eye can scarcely accompany them. Their ordinary manner of travelling is very cheap and very convenient: they sail in covered boats drawn by horses; and in these you are sure to meet people of all nations. Here the Dutch slumber, the French chatter, and the English play at cards. Any man who likes company may have them to his taste. For my part I generally detached myself from all society, and was wholly taken up in observing the face of the country. Nothing can equal its beauty; wherever I turn my eye fine houses, elegant gardens, statues, grottos, vistas, present themselves; but when you enter their towns you are charmed beyond descrip-

tion. No misery is to be seen here; every one is usefully employed.

Scotland and this country bear the highest contrast. There hills and rocks intercept every prospect: here 'tis all a continued plain. There you might see a well-dressed duchess issuing from a dirty close; [1] and here a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch may be compared to a tulip planted in dung; but I never see a Dutchman in his own house but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox. Physic is by no means here taught so well as in Edinburgh; and in all Leyden there are but four British students, owing to all necessaries being so extremely dear and the professors so very lazy (the chemical professor excepted) that we don't much care to come hither. I am not certain how long my stay here may be; however, I expect to have the happiness of seeing you at Kilmore, if I can, next March.

Direct to me, if I am honoured with a letter from you, to Madame Diallion's, at Leyden.

Thou best of men, may Heaven guard and preserve you, and those you love.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

3. *Oliver Goldsmith to Mr. Griffiths*

January, 1759

SIR,—

I know of no misery but a jail to which my own imprudences and your letter seems to point. I have seen

it inevitable these three or four weeks, and, by heavens! request it as a favour,—as a favour that may prevent something more fatal. I have been some years struggling with a wretched being—with all that contempt that indigence brings with it—with all those passions which make contempt insupportable. What, then, has a jail that is formidable? I shall at least have the society of wretches, and such is to me true society. I tell you, again and again, that I am neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing, but I will be punctual to any appointment you or the Jailor shall make; thus far, at least, I do not act the sharper, since, unable to pay my own debts one way, I would generally give some security another. No, sir; had I been a sharper—had I been possessed of less good-nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances.

I am guilty, I own, of meannesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it: my reflections are filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with any remorse for being a villain: that may be a character you unjustly charge me with. Your books, I can assure you, are neither pawned nor sold, but in the custody of a friend, from whom my necessities obliged me to borrow some money. Whatever becomes of my person, you shall have them in a month. It is very possible both the reports you have heard and your own suggestions may have brought you false information with respect to my character; it is very possible that the man whom you now regard with detestation may inwardly burn with grateful resentment.

It is very possible that, upon a second perusal of the letter I sent you, you may see the workings of a mind strongly agitated with gratitude and jealousy. If such circumstances should appear, at least spare invective till my book with Mr. Dodsley [1] shall be published, and then, perhaps, you may see the bright side of a mind, when my professions shall not appear the dictates of necessity, but of choice.

You seem to think Mr. Milner knew me not. Perhaps so; but he was a man I shall ever honour; but I have friendships only with the dead! I ask pardon for taking up so much time; nor shall I add to it by any other professions than that I am, sir, your humble servant,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

P. S. I shall expect impatiently the result of your resolutions.

4. *Oliver Goldsmith to Mrs. Bunbury*

LONDON, [?] 1772

MADAM,—

I read your letter with all that allowance which critical candor could require, but after all find so much to object to, and so much to raise my indignation, that I cannot help giving it a serious answer.—I am not so ignorant, madam, as not to see there are many sarcasms contained in it, and solecisms [2] also. (Solecism is a word that comes from the town of Soleis in Attica, among the Greeks, built by Solon, and applied as we

use the word Kidderminster for curtains from a town also of that name—but this is learning you have no taste for!)—I say, madam, there are many sarcasms in it, and solecisms also. But not to seem an ill-natured critic, I'll take leave to quote your own words, and give you my remarks upon them as they occur. You begin as follows:

> I hope, my good Doctor, you soon will be here,
> And your spring-velvet coat very smart will appear,
> To open our ball the first day of the year.

Pray, madam, where did you ever find the epithet "good," applied to the title of doctor? Had you called me "learned doctor," or "grave doctor," or "noble doctor," it might be allowable, because they belong to the profession. But, not to cavil at trifles, you talk of my "spring-velvet coat," and advise me to wear it the first day of the year, that is, in the middle of winter!—a spring-velvet coat in the middle of winter!!! That would be a solecism indeed! and yet to increase the inconsistence, in another part of your letter you call me a beau. Now, on one side or other, you must be wrong. If I am a beau, I can never think of wearing a spring-velvet in winter: and if I am not a beau, why then, that explains itself. But let me go to your two next strange lines:

> And bring with you a wig, that is modish and gay,
> To dance with the girls that are makers of hay.

The absurdity of making hay at Christmas you yourself seem sensible of: you say your sister will

laugh; and so indeed she well may! The Latins have an expression for a contemptuous kind of laughter, "*naso contemnere adunco;*" that is, to laugh with a crooked nose. She may laugh at you in the manner of the ancients if she thinks fit. But now I come to the most extraordinary of all extraordinary propositions, which is, to take your and your sister's advice in playing at loo.[1] The presumption of the offer raises my indignation beyond the bounds of prose; it inspires me at once with verse and resentment. I take advice and from whom? You shall hear.

First let me suppose, what may shortly be true,
The company set, and the word to be Loo:
All smirking, and pleasant, and big with adventure,
And ogling the stake which is fix'd in the centre.
Round and round go the cards, while I inwardly damn
At never once finding a visit from Pam.
I lay down my stake, apparently cool,
While the harpies about me all pocket the pool.
I fret in my gizzard, yet, cautious and sly,
I wish all my friends may be bolder than I:
Yet still they sit snug, not a creature will aim
By losing their money to venture at fame.
'Tis in vain that at niggardly caution I scold,
'Tis in vain that I flatter the brave and the bold;
All play their own way, and they think me an ass, . .
"What does Mrs. Bunbury?" . . "I, Sir? I pass."
"Pray what does Miss Horneck? take courage, come do."
"Who, I? let me see, sir, why I must pass too."
Mr. Bunbury frets, and I fret like the devil,
To see them so cowardly, lucky, and civil.
Yet still I sit snug, and continue to sigh on,
'Till, made by my losses as bold as a lion,

I venture at all, while my avarice regards
The whole pool as my own. . . "Come, give me five cards."
"Well done!" cry the ladies. "Ah, Doctor, that's good!
The pool's very rich . . ah! the Doctor is loo'd!"
Thus foil'd in my courage, on all sides perplext,
I ask for advice from the lady that's next:
"Pray, ma'am, be so good as to give your advice;
Don't you think the best way is to venture for't twice?"
"I advise," cries the lady, "to try it, I own. . .
"Ah! the doctor is loo'd! Come, Doctor, put down."
Thus, playing, and playing, I still grow more eager,
And so bold, and so bold, I'm at last a bold beggar.
Now, ladies, I ask, if law-matters you're skill'd in,
Whether crimes such as yours should not come before Fielding:[1]
For giving advice that is not worth a straw,
May well be call'd picking of pockets in law;
And picking of pockets, with which I now charge ye,
Is, by quinto Elizabeth, Death without Clergy.[2]
What justice, when both to the Old Bailey [3] brought!
By the gods, I'll enjoy it, tho' tis but in thought!
Both are plac'd at the bar, with all proper decorum,
With bunches of fennel, and nosegays before 'em;
Both cover their faces with mobs and all that,
But the judge bids them, angrily, take off their hat.
When uncover'd, a buzz of inquiry runs round,
"Pray what are their crimes?" . . "They've been pilfering found."
"But, pray, whom have they pilfer'd?" . . "A doctor, I hear."
"*What, yon solemn-faced, odd-looking man that stands near?*"
"The same." . . "What a pity! how does it surprise one,
Two handsomer culprits I never set eyes on!"
Then their friends all come round me with cringing and leering,
To melt me to pity, and soften my swearing.
First Sir Charles advances with phrases well-strung,
"Consider, dear Doctor, the girls are but young."
"The younger the worse," I return him again,

"It shows that their habits are all dyed in grain."
"But then they're so handsome, one's bosom it grieves."
"What signifies *handsome*, when people are thieves?"
"But where is your justice? their cases are hard."
"What signifies *justice?* I want the *reward*."

"There's the parish of Edmonton offers forty pounds; there's the parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch offers forty pounds; there's the parish of Tyburn, from the Hog-in-the-pound to St. Giles's watchhouse, offers forty pounds,—I shall have all that if I convict them!"

"But consider their case! . . it may yet be your own!
And see how they kneel! Is your heart made of stone?"
This moves: . . so at last I agree to relent,
For ten pounds in hand, and ten pounds to be spent.

I challenge you all to answer this; I tell you, you cannot. It cuts deep. But now for the rest of the letter: and next—but I want room—so I believe I shall battle the rest out at Barton some day next week.—I don't value you all!

O. G.

IX

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) was sent by the American Colonies to England and France on diplomatic missions. He wrote with ease, simplicity, and clearness. His letters are full of the homely wisdom, shrewdness, and prudence that characterized Franklin. To his wife, Deborah, the "dear child" of his letters; to his daughter Sarah Bache, wife of the postmaster-general; to Miss Stevenson, an English acquaintance; and to Madame Brillon, a brilliant young French woman, who corrected Franklin's French, he wrote interesting letters, describing his experiences.

1. *Benjamin Franklin to Mrs. Deborah Franklin*

London, 19 Feb., 1758

My dear Child:—

I have wrote you several long letters lately. Last night I received yours of the first and sixth of January, which gave me the great pleasure of hearing that you and my little family are well.

Your kind advice about getting a chariot, I had taken some time before; for I found, that, every time I walked out, I got fresh cold; and the hackney coaches at this end of the town, where most people keep their own, are the worst in the whole city, miserable, dirty, broken, shabby things, unfit to go into when dressed clean, and such as one would be ashamed to get out of at any gentleman's door. As to burning wood, it would answer

no end, unless one would furnish all one's neighbours and the whole city with the same. The whole town is one great smokey house, and every street a chimney, the air full of floating seacoal soot, and you never get a sweet breath of what is pure, without riding some miles for it into the country.

I send you by Captain Budden a large case, and a small box. In the large case is another small box, containing some English china; viz. melons and leaves for a dessert of fruit and cream, or the like, a bowl remarkable for the neatness of the figures, made at Bow, near this city; some coffee cups of the same; a Worcester bowl, ordinary. To show the difference of workmanship, there is something from all the china works in England; and one old true china basin mended, of an odd color. The same box contains four silver salt ladles, newest but ugliest, fashion; a little instrument to core apples; another to make little turnips out of great ones; six coarse breakfast cloths; they are to spread on the tea-table, for nobody breakfasts here on the naked table, but on the cloth they set a large tea board with the cups. There is also a little basket, a present from Mrs. Stevenson to Sally.

In the great case, besides the little box, is contained some carpeting for a best room floor. There is enough for one large or two small ones, it is to be sewed together, the edges being first felled down, and care taken to make the figures meet exactly; there is bordering for the same. This was my fancy. Also two large fine Flanders bed ticks, and two pair of large superfine

blankets, two fine damask table-cloths and napkins, and forty-three ells of Ghentish sheeting Holland. These you ordered. There are also fifty-six yards of cotton, printed curiously from copper plates, a new invention, to make bed and window curtains; and seven yards of chair bottoms, printed in the same way, very neat. These were my fancy; but Mrs. Stevenson tells me I did wrong not to buy both of the same colour. Also seven yards of printed cotton, blue ground, to make you a gown. I bought it by candlelight, and liked it then, but not so well afterwards. If you do not fancy it, send it as a present from me to sister Jenny. There is a better gown for you, of flowered tissue, sixteen yards, of Mrs. Stevenson's fancy, cost nine guineas; and I think it a great beauty.

There are also snuffers, a snuffstand, and extinguisher, of steel, which I send for the beauty of the work. The extinguisher is for spermaceti candles only, and is of a new contrivance, to preserve the snuff upon the candle. There is some music Billy bought for his sister, and some pamphlets for the Speaker, and for Susy Wright. A mahogany and a little shagreen box, with microscopes and other optical instruments loose, are for Mr. Alison, if he likes them; if not, put them in my room until I return. I send the invoice of them, and I wrote to him formerly the reason of my exceeding his orders. There are also two sets of books, a present from me to Sally, *The World* and *The Connoisseur*. My love to her.

I forgot to mention another of my fancyings, viz. a

pair of silk blankets, very fine. They are of a new kind, were just taken in a French prize, and such were never seen in England before. They are called blankets, but I think they will be very neat to cover a summer bed, instead of a quilt or counterpane. I had no choice, so you will excuse the soil on some of the folds; your neighbour Foster can get it off. I also forgot, among the china, to mention a large fine jug for beer, to stand in the cooler. I fell in love with it at first sight; for I thought it looked like a fat jolly dame, clean and tidy, with a neat blue and white calico gown on, good natured and lovely, and put me in mind of—somebody. It has the coffee cups in it, packed in best crystal salt, of a peculiar nice flavour, for the table, not to be powdered.

I hope Sally applies herself closely to her French and music, and that I shall find she has made great proficiency. The harpsichord I was about, and which was to have cost me forty guineas, Mr. Stanley advises me not to buy; and we are looking out for another, one that has been some time in use, and is a tried good one, there being not so much dependence on a new one, though made by the best hands. Sally's last letter to her brother is the best wrote that of late I have seen of hers. I only wish she was a little more careful of her spelling. I hope she continues to love going to church, and would have her read over and over again the *Whole Duty of Man* and the *Lady's Library*.

Look at the figures on the china bowl and coffee cups, with your spectacles on; they will bear examining.

I have made your compliments to Mrs. Stevenson. She is indeed very obliging, takes great care of my health, and is very diligent when I am any way indisposed; but yet I have a thousand times wished you with me, and my little Sally with her ready hands and feet to do, and go, and come, and get what I wanted. There is a great difference in sickness between being nursed with that tender attention, which proceeds from sincere Love; and —— [The remainder of this letter is lost.]

2. *Benjamin Franklin to Miss Mary Stevenson*

PARIS, 14 Sept., 1767

DEAR POLLY,—

I am always pleased with a letter from you, and I flatter myself you may be sometimes pleased in receiving one from me, though it should be of little importance; such as this, which is to consist of a few occasional remarks made here, and in my journey hither.

Soon after I left you in that agreeable society at Bromley, I took the resolution of making a trip with Sir John Pringle into France. We set out on the 28th past. All the way to Dover we were furnished with postchaises, hung so as to lean forward, the top coming down over one's eyes, like a hood, as if to prevent one's seeing the country, which being one of my great pleasures, I was engaged in perpetual disputes with the innkeepers, hostlers, and postilions, about getting the straps taken up a hole or two before, and let down as much behind, they insisting that the chaise leaning for-

ward was an ease to the horses, and that the contrary would kill them. I suppose the chaise leaning forward looks to them like a willingness to go forward, and that its hanging back shows reluctance. They added other reasons, that were no reasons at all, and made me, as upon a hundred other occasions, almost wish that mankind had never been endowed with a reasoning faculty, since they know so little how to make use of it, and so often mislead themselves by it, and that they had been furnished with a good sensible instinct instead of it.

At Dover, the next morning, we embarked for Calais with a number of passengers, who had never before been at sea. They would previously make a hearty breakfast, because, if the wind should fail, we might not get over till supper time. Doubtless they thought, that, when they had paid for their breakfast, they had a right to it, and that when they had swallowed it, they were sure of it. But they had scarce been out half an hour, before the sea laid claim to it, and they were obliged to deliver it up. So that it seems there are uncertainties, even beyond those between the cup and the lip. If ever you go to sea, take my advice, and live sparingly a day or two beforehand. The sickness, if any, will be lighter and sooner over. We got to Calais that evening.

Various impositions we suffered from boatmen, porters, and the like, on both sides of the water. I know not which are most rapacious, the English or French; but the latter have, with their knavery, most politeness.

The roads we found equally good with ours in Eng-

land, in some places paved with smooth stones, like our new streets, for many miles together, and rows of trees on each side, and yet there are no turnpikes. But then the poor peasants complained to us grievously, that they were obliged to work upon the roads full two months in the year, without being paid for their labour. Whether this is true, or whether, like Englishmen, they grumble, cause or no cause, I have not yet been able fully to inform myself.

The women we saw at Calais, on the road, at Boulogne, and in the inns and villages, were generally of dark complexions; but arriving at Abbeville we found a sudden change, a multitude of both women and men in that place appearing remarkably fair. Whether this is owing to a small colony of spinners, wool-combers, and weavers, brought hither from Holland with the woollen manufactory about sixty years ago, or to their being less exposed to the sun, than in other places, their business keeping them much within doors, I know not. Perhaps, as in some other cases, different causes may club in producing the effect, but the effect itself is certain. Never was I in a place of greater industry, wheels and looms going in every house.

As soon as we left Abbeville, the swarthiness returned. I speak generally; for here are some fair women at Paris, who, I think, are not whitened by art. As to rouge, they don't pretend to imitate nature in laying it on. There is no gradual diminution of the colour, from the full bloom in the middle of the cheek to the faint tint near the sides, nor does it show itself

differently in different faces. I have not had the honour of being at any lady's toilette to see how it is laid on, but I fancy I can tell you how it is or may be done. Cut a hole of three inches diameter in a piece of paper; place it on the side of your face in such a manner, as that the top of the hole may be just under the eye; then, with a brush dipped in the colour, paint face and paper together; so when the paper is taken off, there will remain a round patch of red exactly the form of the hole. This is the mode, from the actresses on the stage upwards through all ranks of ladies to the princesses of the blood; but it stops there, the Queen not using it, having in the serenity, complacence, and benignity, that shine so eminently in, or rather through her countenance, sufficient beauty, though now an old woman, to do extremely well without it.

You see I speak of the Queen as if I had seen her; and so I have, for you must know I have been at court. We went to Versailles [1] last Sunday, and had the honour of being presented to the King; he spoke to both of us very graciously and very cheerfully, is a handsome man, has a very lively look, and appears younger than he is. In the evening we were at the *Grand Couvert*, where the family sup in public. The table was half a hollow square, the service gold. When either made a sign for drink, the word was given by one of the waiters; *A boire pour le Roi*,[2] or *A boir pour la Reine*. Then two persons came from within, the one with wine and the other with water in *carafes;* each drank a little glass of what he brought, and then put both the *carafes* with

a glass on a salver, and then presented it. Their distance from each other was such, as that other chairs might have been placed between any two of them. An officer of the court brought us up through the crowd of spectators, and placed Sir John so as to stand between the Queen and Madame Victoire. The King talked a good deal to Sir John, asking many questions about our royal family; and did me, too, the honour of taking some notice of me; that is saying enough; for I would not have you think me so much pleased with this King and Queen, as to have a whit less regard than I used to have for ours. No Frenchman shall go beyond me in thinking my own King and Queen the very best in the world, and the most amiable.

Versailles has had infinite sums laid out in building it and supplying it with water. Some say the expenses exceeded eighty millions sterling. The range of buildings is immense; the garden-front most magnificent, all of hewn stone; the number of statues, figures, urns, &c., in marble and bronze of exquisite workmanship, is beyond conception. But the water-works are out of repair, and so is a great part of the front next the town, looking with its shabby, half-brick walls, and broken windows, not much better than the houses in Durham Yard. There is, in short, both at Versailles and Paris, a prodigious mixture of magnificence and negligence, with every kind of elegance except that of cleanliness, and what we call tidiness. Though I must do Paris the justice to say, that in two points of cleanliness they exceed us. The water they drink, though

from the river, they render as pure as that of the best spring, by filtering it through cisterns filled with sand; and the streets with constant sweeping are fit to walk in, though there is no paved footpath. Accordingly, many well dressed people are constantly seen walking in them. The crowd of coaches and chairs [1] for this reason is not so great. Men, as well as women, carry umbrellas in their hands, which they extend in case of rain or too much sun; and, a man with an umbrella not taking up more than three foot square, or nine square feet of the street, when, if in a coach, he would take up two hundred and forty square feet, you can easily conceive, that, though the streets here are narrow, they may be much less encumbered. They are extremely well paved, and the stones, being generally cubes, when worn on one side, may be turned and become new.

The civilities we everywhere receive give us the strongest impressions of the French politeness. It seems to be a point settled here universally, that strangers are to be treated with respect; and one has just the same deference shown one here by being a stranger, as in England by being a lady. The custom-house officers at Port St. Dennis, as we entered Paris, were about to seize two dozen of excellent Bordeaux wine given us at Boulogne, and which we brought with us; but as soon as they found we were strangers, it was immediately remitted on that account. At the Church of Notre Dame, where we went to see a magnificent illumination, with figures, &c., for the deceased Dau-

phiness,[1] we found an immense crowd, who were kept out by guards; but, the officer being told that we were strangers from England, he immediately admitted us, accompanied and showed us every thing. Why don't we practice this urbanity to Frenchmen? Why should they be allowed to outdo us in any thing?

Here is an exhibition of painting, like ours in London, to which multitudes flock daily. I am not connoisseur enough to judge which has most merit. Every night, Sundays not excepted, here are plays or operas; and, though the weather has been hot, and the house full, one is not incommoded by the heat so much as with us in winter. They must have some way of changing the air, that we are not acquainted with. I shall inquire into it.

Travelling is one way of lengthening life, at least in appearance. It is but about a fortnight since we left London, but the variety of scenes we have gone through makes it seem equal to six months living in one place. Perhaps I have suffered a greater change, too, in my own person, than I could have done in six years at home. I had not been here six days, before my tailor and perruquier [2] had transformed me into a Frenchman. Only think what a figure I make in a little bag-wig and with naked ears! They told me I was become twenty years younger, and looked very gallant.

This letter shall cost you a shilling, and you may consider it cheap, when you reflect, that it has cost me at least fifty guineas to get into the situation, that enables me to write it. Besides, I might, if I had stayed at home, have won perhaps two shillings of you at cribbage.

By the way, now I mention cards, let me tell you that quadrille is now out of fashion here, and English whist all the mode at Paris and the court.

And pray look upon it as no small matter, that, surrounded as I am by the glories of the world, and amusements of all sorts, I remember you, and Dolly, and all the dear good folks at Bromley. It is true, I cannot help it, but must and ever shall remember you all with pleasure.

Need I add that I am particularly, my dear good friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN

3. *Benjamin Franklin to Mr. Strahan*

PHILADELPHIA, July 5, 1775

MR. STRAHAN,

You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that majority, which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns and murder our people. Look upon your hands! They are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends. You are now my enemy,—and I am

Yours,

B. FRANKLIN

4. *Benjamin Franklin to Mrs. Sarah Bache*

PASSY, June 3, 1779

DEAR SALLY,

I have before me your letters of Oct. 22, and Jan. 17th: they are the only ones I received from you in the

course of eighteen months. If you knew how happy your letters make me, and considered how many miscarry, I think you would write oftener.

The clay medallion of me you say you gave to Mr. Hopkinson was the first of the kind made in France. A variety of others have been made since of different sizes; some to be set in the lids of snuff boxes, and some so small as to be worn in rings; and the numbers sold are incredible. These, with the pictures, busts, and prints (of which copies upon copies are spread everywhere), have made your father's face as well known as that of the moon, so that he durst not do any thing that would oblige him to run away, as his phiz would discover him wherever he should venture to show it. It is said by learned etymologists, that the name *doll*, for the images children play with, is derived from the word *Idol*. From the number of *dolls* now made of him, he may be truly said, in that sense, to be *i-doll-ized* in this country.

I think you did right to stay out of town till the summer was over, for the sake of your child's health. I hope you will get out again this summer, during the hot months; for I begin to love the dear little creature from your description of her.

I was charmed with the account you gave me of your industry, the tablecloths of your own spinning, etc.; but the latter part of the paragraph, that you had sent for linen from France because weaving and flax were grown dear, alas, that dissolved the charm; and your sending for long black pins, and lace, and *feathers!*

disgusted me as much as if you had put salt into my strawberries. The spinning, I see, is laid aside, and you are to be dressed for the ball! You seem not to know, my dear daughter, that, of all the dear things in this world, idleness is the dearest, except mischief.

The project you mention, of removing Temple[1] from me, was an unkind one. To deprive an old man, sent to serve his country in a foreign one, of the comfort of a child to attend him, to assist him in health and take care of him in sickness, would be cruel, if it was practicable. In this case it could not be done; for, as the pretended suspicions of him are groundless, and his behaviour in every respect unexceptionable, I should not part with the child, but with the employment. But I am confident, that, whatever may be proposed by weak or malicious people, the Congress is too wise and too good to think of treating me in that manner.

Ben, if I should live long enough to want it, is like to be another comfort to me. As I intend him for a Presbyterian as well as a republican, I have sent him to finish his education at Geneva. He is much grown, in very good health, draws a little, as you will see by the enclosed, learns Latin, writing, arithmetic, and dancing, and speaks French better than English. He made a translation of your last letter to him, so that some of your works may now appear in a foreign language. He has not been long from me. I send the accounts I have of him, and I shall put him in mind of writing to you.

When I began to read your account of the high prices of goods, "a pair of gloves seven dollars, a yard

of common gauze twenty-four dollars, and that it now required a fortune to maintain a family in a very plain way," I expected you would conclude with telling me, that everybody as well as yourself was grown frugal and industrious; and I could scarce believe my eyes in reading forward, that "there never was so much pleasure and dressing going on," and that you yourself wanted black pins and feathers from France to appear, I suppose, in the mode!

This leads me to imagine, that perhaps it is not so much that the goods are grown dear, as that the money is grown cheap, as every thing else will do when excessively plenty; and that people are still as easy nearly in their circumstances, as when a pair of gloves might be had for half a crown. The war indeed may in some degrees raise the prices of goods, and the high taxes which are necessary to support the war may make our frugality necessary; and, as I am always preaching that doctrine, I cannot in conscience or in decency encourage the contrary, by my example, in furnishing my children with foolish modes and luxuries. I therefore send all the articles you desire, that are useful and necessary, and omit the rest; for, as you say you should "have great pride in wearing any thing I send, and showing it as your father's taste," I must avoid giving you an opportunity of doing that with either lace or feathers. If you wear your cambric ruffles as I do, and take care not to mend the holes, they will come in time to be lace; and feathers, my dear girl, may be had in America from every cock's tail.

If you happen again to see General Washington, assure him of my very great and sincere respect, and tell him, that all the old generals here amuse themselves in studying the accounts of his operations, and approve highly of his conduct.

Present my affectionate regards to all friends that inquire after me, particularly Mr. Duffield and family, and write oftener, my dear child, to your loving father,

B. FRANKLIN

X

THOMAS GRAY (1716–1771), author of "The Elegy written in a Country Churchyard," was a versatile letter-writer. He combined the learning of the classical scholar with the love of nature characteristic of the new school of romantic poets, of whom Wordsworth was the leader. Two of his correspondents were the Rev. James Brown of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, who was joint executor of Gray's will; and Dr. Thomas Wharton, also of Cambridge, who was one of the forerunners of the romantic revival.

1. *Thomas Gray to Dr. Thomas Wharton*

FLORENCE, March 12, 1740

MY DEAR, DEAR WHARTON,

(Which is a dear more than I give anybody else. It is very odd to begin with a parenthesis, but) you may think me a beast, for not having sooner wrote to you, and to be sure a beast I am; now, when one owns it, I do not see what you have left to say. I take this opportunity to inform you (an opportunity I have had every week this twelvemonth) that I arrived safe at Calais, and am at present at Florence, a city in Italy in I do not know how many degrees north latitude. Under the Line [1] I am sure it is not, for I am at this instant expiring with cold.

You must know, that, not being certain what circumstances of my history would particularly suit your curiosity, and knowing that all I had to say to you would overflow the narrow limits of many a good quire of

paper, I have taken this method of laying before you the contents, that you may pitch upon what you please, and give me your orders accordingly to expatiate thereupon; for I conclude you will write to me, won't you? Oh yes, when you know, that in a week I set out for Rome, and that the Pope is dead, and that I shall be (I should say, God willing), if nothing extraordinary intervene, and if I am alive and well, and in all human probability, at the coronation of a new one. Now, as you have no other correspondent there, and as, if you do not, I certainly shall not write again (observe my impudence), I take it to be your interest to send me a vast letter full of all sorts of news and politics, and such other ingredients as to you shall seem convenient, with all decent expedition. In the mean time I have the honour to remain,

Your lofing frind tell deth,
T. G.

Proposals for printing by subscription, in

THIS LARGE LETTER

The Travels of T. G., Gentleman, which will consist of all the following particulars:—

Chap. 1.—The author arrives at Dover; his conversation with the mayor of that corporation; sets out in the pacquet boat; grows very sick; with a very minute account of all the circumstances thereof; his arrival at Calais; how the inhabitants of that country speak French.

Chap. 2.—How they feed him with soupe, and what soupe is; how he meets with a Capucin, and what a Capucin is; how they shut him up in a postchaise and send him to Paris; he goes

wondering along during six days, and how there are trees and houses just as in England; arrives at Paris without knowing it.

Chap. 3.—A full account of the river Seine, and of the various animals and plants its borders produce; the dissection of a duchess, with some copper plates, very curious.

Chap. 4.—Goes to the Opera, grand orchestra of humstrums, bagpipes, salt-boxes, tabors, and pipes; the anatomy of a French ear, showing the formation of it to be entirely different from that of an English one, and that sounds have a directly contrary effect upon one and the other. Farinelli at Paris said to have a fine manner, but no voice; a grand ballet, old women with flowers and jewels stuck in the curls of their grey hair, red-heeled shoes, and roll-ups innumerable, hoops and panniers immeasurable, paint unspeakable.

Chap. 5.—The author takes unto him a tailor; his character; how he covers him with silk and fringe, and widens his figure with buckram a yard on each side; waistcoat and breeches so straight he can neither breathe nor walk; how the barber curls him *en bequille* [1] and *à la négligée*, and ties a vast *solitaire* about his neck; how the milliner lengthens his ruffles to his fingers' ends and sticks his two arms into a muff; how he cannot stir, and how they cut him in proportion to his clothes.

Chap. 6.—He is carried to Versailles; despises it infinitely; a dissertation upon taste; goes to an installation in the *chapelle royale*. Enter the king and fifty fiddlers *solus*. Kettle drums and trumpets, queens and dauphins, princesses and cardinals, incense and the mass, old knights making curtsies.

Chap. 7.—The author goes into the country to Rheims in Champaign; stays there three months; what he did there (he must beg the reader's pardon, but has really forgot).

Chap. 8.—Proceeds to Lyons; the vastness of that city (cannot see the streets for houses). A poem upon the confluence of the Rhone and the Saone, by a friend of the author's, very pretty.

Chap. 9.—Makes a journey into Savoy, and in his way visits

the Grande Chartreuse; he is set astride upon a mule's back, and begins to climb up the mountain, rocks and torrents beneath, pine-trees and snows above; horrors and terrors on all sides. The author dies of fright.

Chap. 10.—He goes to Geneva; returns to Lyons; gets a surfeit with eating ortolans[1] and lampreys; is advised to go into Italy for the benefit of the air.

Chap. 11.—Sets out the latter end of November to cross the Alps; he is devoured by a wolf, and how it is to be devoured by a wolf. The seventh day he comes to the foot of Mount Cenis. How he is wrapped up in bearskins and beaverskins, boots on his legs, caps on his head, muffs on his hands, and taffety over his eyes; he is placed on a bier, and is carried to heaven by the savages blindfold. How he lights among a certain fat nation called Clouds; how they are always in a sweat, and never speak; how they flock about him, and think him very odd for not doing so too. He falls plump into Italy.

Chap. 12.—He arrives at Turin, goes to Genoa, and from thence to Placentia; crosses the river Trebbia; the ghost of Hannibal appears to him; and what it and he says upon the occasion; locked out of Parma, in a cold winter's night; the author by an ingenious stratagem gains admittance; despises them and that city, and proceeds through Reggio to Modena. How the duke and duchess lie over their own stables, and go every night to a vile Italian comedy; despises them and it, and proceeds to Bologna.

Chap. 13.—Enters into the dominions of the Pope of Rome; the author longs for Bologna sausages and hams.

Chap. 14.—Observations on antiquities. The author proves that Bologna was the ancient Tarentum; that the battle of Salamis,[2] contrary to the vulgar opinion, was fought by land, and not far from Ravenna.

Chap. 15.—His arrival at Florence; account of the city, and manners of the inhabitants, with a learned dissertation on the true situation of Gomorrah.

And here will end the first part of these instructive and enter-

taining voyages; the subscribers are to pay twenty guineas, nineteen down, and the remainder upon delivery of the book. N. B.—A few are printed on the softest royal brown paper, for the use of the curious.

2. *Thomas Gray to the Reverend James Brown*

LONDON, Sept. 24, 1761

DEAR SIR,

I set out at half an hour past four in the morning for the Coronation,[1] and (in the midst of perils and dangers) arrived very safe at my Lord Chamberlain's box in Westminster Hall. It was on the left hand of the throne, over that appropriated to the foreign ministers. Opposite to us was the box of the Earl Marshal and other great officers; and below it that of the princess and younger part of the royal family. Next them was the royal sideboard. Then below the steps of the *haut pas* [2] were the tables of the nobility, on each side quite to the door; behind them boxes for the sideboards; over these other galleries for the peers' tickets; and still higher the boxes of the Auditor, the Board of Green Cloth, &c. All these thronged with people head above head, all dressed; and the women with their jewels on. In front of the throne was a *triomphe* of foliage and flowers resembling nature, placed on the royal table, and rising as high as the canopy itself.

The several bodies that were to form the procession issued from behind the throne gradually and in order, and, proceeding down the steps, were ranged on either side of hall. All the privy councillors that are common-

ers (I think) were there, except Mr. Pitt, mightily dressed in rich stuffs of gold and colours, with long flowing wigs, some of them comical figures enough. The Knights of the Bath, with their high plumage, were very ornamental. Of the Scotch peers or peeresses that you see in the list very few walked, and of the English dowagers as few, though many of them were in town, and among the spectators. The princess and royal family entered their box. The Queen and then the King took their places in their chairs of state, glittering with jewels, for the hire of which, besides all his own, he paid £9,000; and the dean and chapter (who had been waiting without doors a full hour and half) brought up the regalia, which the Duke of Ancaster received and placed on the table.

Here ensued great confusion in the delivering them out to the lords who were appointed to bear them; the heralds were stupid; the great officers knew nothing of what they were doing. The Bishop of Rochester would have dropped the crown if it had not been pinned to the cushion, and the King was often obliged to call out, and set matters right; but the sword of state had been entirely forgot, so Lord Huntingdon was forced to carry the lord mayor's two-handed sword instead of it. This made it later than ordinary before they got under their canopies and set forward. I should have told you that the old Bishop of Lincoln, with his stick, went doddling by the side of the Queen, and the Bishop of Chester had the pleasure of bearing the golden paten.[1]

When they were gone, we went down to dinner, for there were three rooms below, where the Duke of Devonshire was so good as to feed us with great cold sirloins of beef, legs of mutton, fillets of veal, and other substantial viands and liquors, which we devoured all higgledy-piggledy, like porters; after which every one scrambled up again, and seated themselves. The tables were now spread, the cold viands eat, and on the king's table and sideboard a great show of gold plate, and a dessert representing Parnassus, with abundance of figures of Muses, Arts, &c., designed by Lord Talbot. This was so high that those at the end of the hall could see neither king nor queen at supper. When they returned it was so dark that the people without doors scarce saw anything of the procession, and as the hall had then no other light than two long ranges of candles at each of the peers' tables, we saw almost as little as they, only one perceived the lords and ladies sidling in and taking their places to dine; but the instant the queen's canopy entered, fire was given to all the lustres at once by trains of prepared flax, that reached from one to the other. To me it seemed an interval of not half a minute before the whole was in a blaze of splendour. It is true that for that half minute it rained fire upon the heads of all the spectators (the flax falling in large flakes); and the ladies, Queen and all, were in no small terror, but no mischief ensued. It was out as soon as it fell, and the most magnificent spectacle I ever beheld remained. The King (bowing to the lords as he passed) with his crown on his head, and the sceptre and orb

in his hands, took his place with great majesty and grace. So did the Queen, with her crown, sceptre, and rod.

Then supper was served in gold plate. The Earl Talbot, Duke of Bedford, and Earl of Effingham, in their robes, all three on horseback, prancing and curveting like the hobby-horses in the Rehearsal, ushered in the courses to the foot of the *haut pas*. The Earl of Denbigh carved for the king, the Earl of Holdernesse for the Queen. They both eat like farmers. At the board's end, on the right, supped the Dukes of York and Cumberland; on the left Lady Augusta; all of them very rich in jewels. The maple cups, the wafers, the faulcons, &c. were brought up and presented in form; three persons were knighted; and before ten the King and Queen retired. Then I got a scrap of supper, and at one o'clock I walked home. So much for the spectacle, which in magnificence surpassed every thing I have seen.

Next I must tell you that the Barons of the Cinque Ports,[2] who by ancient right should dine at a table on the *haut pas*, at the right hand of the throne, found that no provision at all had been made for them, and, representing their case to Earl Talbot, he told them, "Gentlemen, if you speak to me as High Steward, I must tell you there was no room for you; if as Lord Talbot, I am ready to give you satisfaction in any way you think fit." They are several of them gentlemen of the best families; so this has bred ill blood. In the next place, the City of London found they had no

table neither; but Beckford bullied my Lord High Steward till he was forced to give them that intended for the Knights of the Bath, and instead of it they dined at the entertainment prepared for the great officers. When you have read this send it to Pa.[1]

XI

HORACE WALPOLE, fourth earl of Orford (1717–1797), possessed a hobby, "that stalking horse of the nimble wit," one of the many requisites of a good letter-writer. The villa at Strawberry Hill, near Twickenham, on the banks of the Thames, was his plaything and the subject of many of his most delightful letters. After alterations covering a quarter of a century, it resembled a Gothic castle. Walpole's crowning literary achievement is his letters. His intimate association with court life enabled him to view many events at close range and so write the details vividly. Fashionable scandal, social events, political struggles, his own foibles, likes, and dislikes were communicated to his numerous and widespread correspondents. Sir Horace Mann, to whom he wrote London news, was minister to Italy. George Montagu was one of his Eton friends.

1. *Horace Walpole to C. C.*

STRAWBERRY HILL, May 3, 1749

I am come hither for a few days to repose myself after a torrent of diversions, and am writing to you in my charming bow-window, with a tranquillity and satisfaction which, I fear, I am grown old enough to prefer to the hurry of amusements, in which the whole world has lived for this last week. We have at last celebrated the peace [1] and that as much in extremes as we generally do everything, whether we have reason to be glad or sorry, pleased or angry. Last Tuesday it was proclaimed; the King did not go to St. Paul's, but at night the whole town was illuminated.

The next day was what was called a jubilee-masquerade in the Venetian manner at Ranelagh: [1] it had nothing Venetian in it, but was by far the best understood, and the prettiest spectacle I ever saw: nothing in a fairy tale ever surpassed it. One of the proprietors, who is a German and belongs to the court, had got my Lady Yarmouth to persuade the King to order it. It began at three o'clock, and about five, people of fashion began to go. When you entered, you found the whole garden filled with masks,[2] and spread with tents. In one quarter was a May-pole dressed with the garlands, and people dancing round it to a tabor and pipe and rustic music, all masqued, as were all the various bands of music, that were disposed in different parts of the garden, some like huntsmen with French-horns, some like peasants, and a troop of harlequins and scaramouches [3] in the little open temple on the mount. On the canal was a sort of gondola, adorned with flags and streamers, and filled with music, rowing about. All round the outside of the amphitheatre were shops filled with Dresden china, japan,[4] &c. and all the shopkeepers in mask. The amphitheatre was illuminated, and in the middle was a circular bower, composed of all kinds of firs in tubs, from twenty to thirty feet high: under them orange-trees, with small lamps in each orange, and below them all sorts of the finest auriculas [5] in pots; and festoons of natural flowers hanging from tree to tree. Between the arches were firs, and smaller ones in the balconies above. There were booths for tea and wine, gaming-tables and dancing, and about

two thousand persons. In short, it pleased me more than anything I ever saw. It is to be once more, and probably finer as to dresses, as there has since been a subscription-masquerade, and people will go in their rich habits.

The next day were the fireworks, which by no means answered the expense, the length of preparation, and the expectation that had been raised: indeed for a week before, the town was like a country fair, the streets filled from morning to night, scaffolds building wherever you could or could not see; and coaches arriving from every corner of the kingdom. This hurry and lively scene, with a sight of the immense crowd in the park and on every house, the guards, and the machine itself, which was very beautiful, was all that was worth seeing. The rockets and whatever was thrown up into the air succeeded mighty well, but the wheels and all that was to compose the principal part, were pitiful and ill-conducted, with no changes of coloured fires and shapes: the illumination was mean, and lighted so slowly that scarce anybody had patience to wait the finishing; and then what contributed to the awkwardness of the whole, was the right pavilion catching fire, and being burnt down in the middle of the show. The King, the Duke, and Princess Emily saw it from the library, with their courts: the Prince and Princess with their children from Lady Middlesex's, no place being provided for them, nor any invitation given to the library. The Lords and Commons had galleries built for them and the chief citizens along the rails of the

mall: the Lords had four tickets apiece, and each Commoner, at first but two, till the Speaker bounced and obtained a third.

Very little mischief was done, and but two persons killed: at Paris there were forty killed, and near three hundred wounded, by a dispute between the French and Italians in the management, who, quarrelling for precedence in lighting the fires, both lighted at once and blew up the whole. Our mob was extremely tranquil, and very unlike those I remember in my father's time, when it was a measure in the Opposition to work up everything to mischief. We are as much now in the opposite extreme, and in general so pleased with the peace, that I could not help being struck with a passage I read lately in Pasquier, an old French author, who says that "in the time of Francis I, the French used to call their creditors *Des Anglois*, from the facility with which the English gave credit to them in all treaties, though they had broken so many." On Saturday we had a serenata at the Opera-house, called Peace in Europe, but it was a wretched performance.

On Monday there was a subscription masquerade, much fuller than that of last year, but not so agreeable or so various in dresses. The King was well disguised in an old-fashioned English habit, and much pleased with somebody who desired him to hold their cup as they were drinking tea. The Duke had a dress of the same kind, but was so immensely corpulent, that he looked like Cacofogo, the drunken Captain in *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*.[1] The Duchess of Richmond was

a lady mayoress in the time of James I, and Lord Delawarr, Queen Elizabeth's porter, from a picture in the guard-chamber at Kensington; they were admirable masks. Lady Rochford, Miss Evelyn, Miss Bishop, Lady Stafford, and Mrs. Pitt were in vast beauty, particularly the last, who had a red veil, which made her look gloriously handsome. I forgot Lady Kildare. Mr. Conway was the Duke in Don Quixote, and the finest figure I ever saw.

Adieu! my dear child; I have been long in arrears to you, but I trust you will take this huge letter as an acquittal. You see my Villa makes me a good correspondent; how happy I should be to show it to you, if I could, with no mixture of disagreeable circumstances to you. I have made a vast plantation! Lord Leicester told me the other day that he heard I would not buy some old china, because I was laying out all my money in trees: "Yes," said I, "my Lord, I used to love blue trees, but now I like green ones."

2. *Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann*

STRAWBERRY HILL, June 12, 1753

I could not rest any longer with the thought of your having no idea of a place of which you hear so much, and therefore desired Mr. Bentley to draw you as much idea of it as the post would be persuaded to carry from Twickenham to Florence. The enclosed enchanted little landscape, then, is Strawberry Hill; and I will try to explain so much of it to you as will help to let

you know whereabouts we are when we are talking to you; for it is uncomfortable in so intimate a correspondence as ours not to be exactly master of every spot where one another is writing, or reading, or sauntering.

This view of the castle is what I have just finished, and is the only side that will be at all regular. Directly before it is an open grove, through which you see a field, which is bounded by a serpentine wood of all kinds of trees, and flowering shrubs, and flowers. The lawn before the house is situated on the top of a small hill, from whence to the left you see the town and church of Twickenham encircling a turn of the river, that looks exactly like a seaport in miniature. The opposite shore is a most delicious meadow bounded by Richmond Hill, which loses itself in the noble woods of the park to the end of the prospect on the right, where is another turn of the river, and the suburbs of Kingston as luckily placed as Twickenham is on the left; and a natural terrace on the brow of my hill, with meadows of my own down to the river, commands both extremities. Is not this a tolerable prospect? You must figure that all this is perpetually enlivened by a navigation of boats and barges, and by a road below my terrace with coaches, post-chaises, wagons, and horsemen constantly in motion, and the fields speckled with cows, horses, and sheep.

Now you shall walk into the house. The bow-window below leads into a little parlor hung with a stone-colour Gothic paper and Jackson's Venetian prints, which I

could never endure while they pretended, infamous as they are, to be after Titian,[1] &c., but when I gave them this air of barbarous bas-reliefs, they succeeded to a miracle: it is impossible at first sight not to conclude that they contain the history of Attila [2] or Tottila, done about the very era. From hence, under two gloomy arches, you come to the hall and staircase, which is impossible to describe to you, as it is the most particular and chief beauty of the castle. Imagine the walls covered with (I call it paper, but it is really paper painted in perspective to represent) Gothic fretwork: the lightest Gothic balustrade to the staircase, adorned with antelopes (our supporters) bearing shields; lean windows fattened with rich saints in painted glass, and a vestibule open with three arches on the landing-place, and niches full of trophies of old coats of mail, Indian shields made of rhinoceros's hides, broadswords, quivers, longbows, arrows, and spears—all *supposed* to be taken by Sir Terry Robsart in the holy wars.

But as none of this regards the enclosed drawing, I will pass to that. The room on the ground-floor nearest to you is a bed-chamber, hung with yellow paper and prints, framed in a new manner, invented by Lord Cardigan; that is, with black and white borders printed. Over this is Mr. Chute's bed-chamber, hung with red in the same manner. The bow-window room's one pair of stairs is not yet finished; but in the tower beyond it is the charming room where I am now writing to you. It is hung with green paper and water-colour pictures, has two windows; the one in the drawing looks to the

garden, the other to the beautiful prospect; and the top of each glutted with the richest painted glass of the arms of England, crimson roses, and twenty other pieces of green, purple and historic bits. I must tell you, by the way, that the castle, when finished, will have two-and-thirty windows enriched with painted glass.

The room where we always live is hung with a blue and white paper in stripes adorned with festoons, and a thousand plump chairs, couches, and luxurious settees covered with linen of the same pattern, and with a bow-window commanding the prospect, and gloomed with limes that shade half each window, already darkened with painted glass in *chiaro-scuro*,[1] set in deep blue glass. Under this room is a cool little hall, where we generally dine, hung with paper to imitate Dutch tiles.

I have described so much, that you will begin to think that all the accounts I used to give you of the diminutiveness of our habitation were fabulous; but it is really incredible how small most of the rooms are. The only two good rooms I shall have are not yet built: they will be an eating-room and a library, each twenty by thirty, and the latter fifteen feet high. For the rest of the house I could send it to you in this letter as easily as the drawing, only that I should have no where to live till the return of the post. The Chinese summer-house, which you may distinguish in the distant landscape, belongs to my Lord Radnor. We pique ourselves upon nothing but simplicity, and have no carvings, gildings, paintings, inlayings, or tawdry businesses.

3. *Horace Walpole to George Montagu*

ARLINGTON STREET: November 13, 1760

Even the honeymoon of a new reign [1] don't produce events every day. There is nothing but the common saying of addresses and kissing hands. The King himself seems all good nature, and wishing to satisfy everybody; all his speeches are obliging. I saw him again yesterday, and was surprised to find the levee-room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. This sovereign don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news; he walks about, and speaks to everybody. I saw him afterwards on the throne where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answers to addresses well; it was the Cambridge address, carried by the Duke of Newcastle in his doctor's gown, and looking like the *Médecin malgré lui*.[2]

Do you know, I had the curiosity to go to the burying t'other night; I had never seen a royal funeral; nay, I walked as a rag of quality, which I found would be, and so it was, the easiest way of seeing it. It is absolutely a noble sight. The Prince's chamber, hung with purple, and a quantity of silver lamps, the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands, had a very good effect. The ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber.

The procession, through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch, the horse-guards lining

the outside, their officers with drawn sabres and crape sashes on horseback, the drums muffled, the fifes, bells tolling, and minute guns,—all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the abbey, where we were received by the dean and chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches; the whole abbey so illuminated, that one saw it to greater advantage than by day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof, all appearing distinctly, and with the happiest *chiaro-scuro*. There wanted nothing but incense, and little chapels here and there, with priests saying mass for the repose of the defunct; yet one could not complain of its not being catholic enough. I had been in dread of being coupled with some boy of ten years old; but the heralds were not very accurate, and I walked with George Grenville, taller and older, to keep me in countenance.

When we came to the Chapel of Henry the Seventh, all solemnity and decorum ceased; no order was observed, people sat or stood where they could or would; the yeomen of the guard were crying out for help, oppressed by the immense weight of the coffin; the bishop read sadly and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter, *Man that is born of a woman*, was chanted, not read; and the anthem, besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial. The real serious part was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis,[1] and a cloak of black cloth, with a train of five yards.

Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected, too, one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault into which, in all probability, he must himself so soon descend; think how unpleasant a situation! He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance.

This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle; but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand, and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round, found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault, where the coffin lay, attended by mourners with lights. Clavering, the groom of the bed-chamber, refused to sit up with the body, and was dismissed by the King's order.

I have nothing more to tell you. Good night.

Yours ever.

XII

ANOTHER master of the art of letter-writing was William Cowper (1731–1800). He was a shy, sensitive, lonely man, a prey to religious depression, and finally a victim of melancholia. He lived at Olney and Weston in the household of Mrs. Unwin, for whom he had a sincere affection. Cowper, the lonely recluse, finding recreation in gardening, sketching, building a summer house, translating Homer, caring for his hares, presents a figure unique in English literature. To John Newton, a curate, he wrote freely about his religious fears. His most delightful letters, however, are addressed to Lady Hesketh, his cousin, whose visits Cowper anticipated with keenest delight.

1. *William Cowper to Lady Hesketh*

OLNEY, Feb. 9, 1786

MY DEAREST COUSIN—

I have been impatient to tell you that I am impatient to see you again. Mrs. Unwin partakes with me in all my feelings upon this subject, and longs also to see you. I should have told you so by the last post, but have been so completely occupied that it was impossible to do it. And now, my dear, let me tell you once more that your kindness in promising us a visit has charmed us both. I shall see you again. I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will show you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse, and its banks, everything that I have described. I anticipate the pleasure of those days not very far distant, and feel a

part of it at this moment. Talk not of an inn! Mention it not for your life! We have never had so many visitors but we could easily accommodate them all, though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because, before that time my green-house will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out we go in. I line it with mats, and spread the floor with mats; and there you shall sit, with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention the country will not be in complete beauty. And I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. Imprimis, as soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges Puss at present. But he, poor fellow, is worn out with age, and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author; it was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made. But, a merciless servant having scrubbed it until it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour, into which I will conduct you, and

where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin, unless we should meet her before, and where we will be as happy as the day is long. Order yourself, my Cousin, to the Swan, at Newport, and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney.

My dear, I have told Homer [1] what you say about casks and urns, and have asked him whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be anything better than a cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too.

Adieu! my dearest, dearest Cousin,

W. C.

2. *William Cowper to Lady Hesketh*

OLNEY, May 29, 1786

Thou dear, comfortable cousin, whose letters, among all that I receive, have this property peculiarly their own—that I expect them without trembling, and never find anything in them that does not give me pleasure—for which, therefore, I would take nothing in exchange that the world could give me, save and except that for which I must exchange them soon—(and happy shall I be to do so,) your own company. That indeed is delayed a little too long; to my impatience, at least, it seems so, who find the spring, backward as it is, too forward, because many of its beauties will have faded before you will have an opportunity to see them. We

took our customary walk yesterday in the wilderness at Weston, and saw, with regret, the laburnums, syringas, and guelder-roses, some of them blown, and others just upon the point of blowing, and could not help observing—all these will be gone before Lady Hesketh comes. Still, however, there will be roses, and jasmine, and honey-suckle, and shady walks, and cool alcoves, and you will partake them with us. But I want you to have a share of everything that is delightful here, and cannot bear that the advance of the season should steal away a single pleasure before you can come to enjoy it.

Every day I think of you, and almost all day long; I will venture to say, that even *you* were never so expected in your life. I called last week at the Quaker's to see the furniture of your bed, the fame of which had reached me. It is, I assure you, superb, of printed cotton, and the subject classical. Every morning you will open your eyes on Phaeton [1] kneeling to Apollo, and imploring his father to grant him the conduct of his chariot for a day. May your sleep be as sound as your bed will be sumptuous, and your nights at least will be provided for.

I shall send up the sixth and seventh books of the *Iliad* shortly, and shall address them to you. You will forward them to the General. I long to show you my workshop, and to see you sitting on the opposite side of my table. We shall be as close packed as two wax figures in an old-fashioned picture-frame. I am writing in it now. It is the place in which I fabricate all my

verse in summer time. I rose an hour sooner than usual this morning, that I might finish my sheet before breakfast, for I must write this day to the General.

The grass under my windows is all bespangled with dew-drops, and the birds are singing in the apple-trees, among the blossoms. Never poet had a more commodious oratory in which to invoke his Muse.

I have made your heart ache too often, my poor dear cousin, with talking about my fits of dejection. Something has happened that has led me to the subject, or I would have mentioned them more sparingly. Do not suppose, or suspect that I treat you with reserve; there is nothing in which I am concerned that you shall not be made acquainted with; but the tale is too long for a letter. I will only add, for your present satisfaction, that the cause is not exterior, that it is not within the reach of human aid, and that yet I have a hope myself, and Mrs. Unwin a strong persuasion, of its removal. I am indeed even now, and have been for a considerable time, sensible of a change for the better, and expect, with good reason, a comfortable lift from you.

Guess, then, my beloved cousin, with what wishes I look forward to the time of your arrival, from whose coming I promise myself not only pleasure, but peace of mind,—at least an additional share of it. At present it is an uncertain and transient guest with me; but the joy with which I shall see and converse with you at Olney, may perhaps make it an abiding one.

W. C.

3. *William Cowper to John Newton*

OLNEY, Aug. 5, 1786

MY DEAR FRIEND—

You have heard of our intended removal. The house that is to receive us is in a state of preparation, and, when finished, will be both smarter and more commodious than our present abode. But the circumstance that recommends it chiefly is its situation. Long confinement in the winter, and indeed for the most part in the autumn too, has hurt us both. A gravel-walk, thirty yards long, affords but indifferent scope to the locomotive faculty: yet it is all that we have had to move in for eight months in the year, during thirteen years that I have been a prisoner. Had I been confined in the Tower,[1] the battlements of it would have furnished me with a larger space.

You say well, that there was a time when I was happy at Olney; and I am now as happy at Olney as I expect to be any where without the presence of God. Change of situation is with me no otherwise an object than as both Mr. Unwin's health and mine may happen to be concerned in it. A fever of the slow and spirit-oppressing kind seems to belong to all, except the natives, who have dwelt in Olney many years; and the natives have putrid fevers. Both they and we, I believe, are immediately indebted for our respective maladies to an atmosphere encumbered with raw vapours issuing from flooded meadows; and we in particular, perhaps, have fared worse for sitting so

often, and sometimes for months, over a cellar filled with water. These ills we shall escape in the uplands, and, as we may reasonably hope, of course, their consequences.

But, as for happiness, he that has once had communion with his Maker must be more frantic than ever I was yet if he can dream of finding it at a distance from Him. I no more expect happiness at Weston than here, or than I should expect it in company with felons and outlaws. Animal spirits, however, have their value, and are especially desirable to him who is condemned to carry a burthen, which at any rate will tire him, but which, without their aid cannot fail to crush him. The dealings of God with me are to myself utterly unintelligible. I have never met, either in books or in conversation, with an experience at all similar to my own. More than a twelvemonth has passed since I began to hope that, having walked the whole breadth of the bottom of this Red Sea, I was beginning to climb the opposite shore, and I prepared to sing the song of Moses. But I have been disappointed; these hopes have been blasted; those comforts have been wrested from me. I could not be so duped, even by the arch-enemy himself, as to be made to question the divine nature of them; but I have been made to believe (which, you will say, is being duped still more) that God gave them to me in derision and took them away in vengeance. Such however is and has been my persuasion many a long day, and when I shall think on that subject more comfortably, or, as

you will be inclined to tell me, more rationally and scripturally, I know not.

In the meantime, I embrace with alacrity every alleviation of my case, and with the more alacrity because whatsoever proves a relief of my distress is a cordial to Mrs. Unwin, whose sympathy with me, through the whole of it, has been such that, despair excepted, her burthen has been as heavy as mine. Lady Hesketh, by her affectionate behaviour, the cheerfulness of her conversation, and the constant sweetness of her temper, has cheered us both, and Mrs. Unwin not less than me. By her help we get change of air and of scene, though still resident at Olney, and by her means have intercourse with some families in this country with whom, but for her, we could never have been acquainted. Her presence here would, at any time, even in my happiest days, have been a comfort to me, but in the present day I am doubly sensible of its value. She leaves nothing unsaid, nothing undone, that she thinks will be conducive to our well-being; and, so far as she is concerned, I have nothing to wish but that I could believe her sent hither in mercy to myself,—then I should be thankful.

I am, my dear friend, with Mrs. Unwin's love to Mrs. N. and yourself, hers and yours, as ever,

W. C.

XIII

Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) is famous mainly for the *Waverly Novels*, but the letter to his daughter-in-law shows that he could write letters in a light, playful, spontaneous fashion. His son, Walter, had married an heiress of great wealth and taken her to Ireland. Sir Walter felt the difference she must experience between her own luxurious home and that of a soldier. The financial ruin of Scott was a significant event in his life. He was involved in the failure of Constable and Ballantyne, but he bore the distressing shock with nobility of spirit. At the age of fifty-five, he set himself to the task of earning the sum of his indebtedness, almost $600,000, and virtually accomplished it. If his adversity tested him, it also proved his friends. The Earl of Dudley, on hearing of the catastrophe, exclaimed, "Scott ruined! the author of *Waverly* ruined! Let every man to whom he has given months of delight give him a sixpence, and he will rise to-morrow, richer than Rothschild." Dr. Thomas Hughes, author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, was one of his warmest friends.

1. *Sir Walter Scott to Mrs. Walter Scott, Dublin*

Abbotsford, March 20, 1825

My dearest Child,—

I had the great pleasure of receiving your kind and attentive letter from London a few days later than I ought to have done, because it was lying here while I was absent on a little excursion, of which I have to give a most interesting account. Believe me, my love, I am

very grateful for the time you bestow on me, and that you cannot give so great happiness to any one as to me by saying you are well and happy. My daughters, who deserve all the affection a father can bestow, are both near me, and in safe guardianship, the one under the charge of a most affectionate husband, and the other under the eye of her parents. For my sons, I have taught them, and what was more difficult, I have taught myself the philosophy, that for their own sake and their necessary advancement in life, their absences from my house must be long, and their visits short; and as they are both, I hope, able to conduct themselves wisely and honorably, I have learned to be contented to hope the best, without making myself or them uneasy by fruitless anxiety.

But for *you*, my dear Jane, who have come among us with such generous and confiding affection, my stoicism must excuse me if I am more anxious than becomes a philosopher or a hackneyed man of the world, who uses in common cases to take that world as it goes. I cannot help worrying myself with the question, whether the object of such constant and affectionate care may not feel less happy than I could wish her, in scenes which must be so new, and under privations which must be felt by you the more that your earlier life has been an entire stranger to them. I know Walter's care and affection will soften and avert these as much as possible, and if there be anything in the power of old papa to assist him in the matter, you will make him most happy by tasking that power to the utmost. I wrote to him

yesterday that he might proceed in bargain for the troop, and send me the terms, that I might provide the needful, as mercantile folks call it, in time and place suitable. The rank of Captain gives, I am aware, a degree of consideration which is worth paying for; and what is still more, my little Jane, as a Captain's lady, takes better accommodation every way than is given to a subaltern's. So we must get the troop by all means.

Now I will plague you with no more business, but give you an account of myself in the manner of Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck, if ever you heard of such a person. You must suppose that you are busy with your work, and that I am telling you some long story or other, and that you now and then look round and say *eh*, as you do when you are startled by a question or an assertion—it is not quite *eh* either, but just a little quiet interjection, which shows you are attending. You see what a close observer papa is of his child.

Well then, when, as I calculate (as a Yankee would say), you were tossing on the waves of the Irish Channel, I was also tossing on the Vadum Scotticum of Ptolemy, on my return from the celebrated *Urbs Orrea* of Tacitus. "Eh!" says Jane: "Lord, Walter, what can the old gentleman mean?"—"*Weiss nichts davon*," says the hussar, taking his cigar from under his mustaches (no, I beg pardon, he does not take out the cigar, because, from the last advices, he has used none in his London journey). He says *Weiss nichts*, however, which is,—in French, *Je n'en sais rien*—in broad

Scotch, *I neither ken nor care.*—Well, you ask Mr. Edgeworth, or the chaplain of the regiment, or the first scholar you come by—that is to say, you don't attempt to pronounce the hieroglyphical word, but you fold down the letter just at the place, show the talismanic *Urbs Orrea* and no more, and ask him in which corner of the earth Sir Walter can have been wandering? So, after a moment's recollection, he tells you that the great Roman general, Agricola, was strangely put to his trumps at the Urbs Orrea during his campaign in Caledonia, and that the ninth legion was surprised there by the British, and nearly destroyed; then he gets a county history, and a Tacitus, and Sir Robert Sibbald's tracts, and begins to fish about, and finds at length that the Urbs Orrea is situated in the Kingdom of Fife—that it is now called Lochore—that it belonged to the Lochores—the DeVallences—the Wardlaws—the Malcolms—and Lord knows whom in succession—and then, in a sheet wet from the press, he finds it is now the property of a pretty and accomplished young lady, who, in an unthrift generosity, has given it—with a much more valuable present, namely, her own self—to a lieutenant of hussars. So there the scholar shuts his book, and observes that as there are many cairns and tumuli and other memorials upon the scene of action, he wonders whether Sir Walter had not the curiosity to open some of them. "Now heaven forbid!" says Jane: "I think the old knight has stock enough for boring one with his old Border ballads and battles, without raising the bones of men who have slept one

thousand years quietly on my own estate to assist him."

Then I can keep silence no longer, but speak in my own proper person. "Pray, do you not bore me, Mrs. Jane, and have not I a right to retaliate?"—"*Eh!*" says the Lady of Lochore, "how is it possible I should bore you, and so many hundred miles between us?"—"That's the very reason," says the Laird of Abbotsford, "for if you were with me, the thing would be impossible—but being, as you say, so many hundred miles distant, I am always thinking about you, and asking myself an hundred questions which I cannot answer; for instance, I cannot go about my little improvements without teasing myself with thinking whether Jane would like the greenhouse larger or less—and whether Jane would like such line of walk, or such another—and whether that stile is not too high for Jane to step over."—"Dear papa," says Jane, "*your own style* is really too high for my comprehension."

Well, then, I am the most indulgent papa in the world, and so you see I have turned over a new leaf. The plain sense of all this rambling stuff, which escapes from my pen as it would from my tongue, is that I have visited for a day, with Isaac Bayley, your dominions of Lochore, and was excellently entertained, and as happy as I could be where everything was putting me in mind that she was absent whom I could most have wished present. It felt, somehow, like an intrusion, and as if it was not quite right that I should be in Jane's house, while Jane herself was amongst strangers:

this is the sort of false colouring which imagination gives to events and circumstances.

Well, but I was much pleased with all I saw, and particularly with the high order Mr. Bayley has put everything into; and I climbed Bennarty like a wild goat, and scrambled through the old crags like a wild-cat, and pranced through your pastures like a wild-buck (fat enough to be in season though), and squattered through your drains like a wild-duck, and had nearly lost myself in your morasses like the ninth legion, and visited the old castle, which is *not a stupid place*, and in short, wandered from Dan to Beersheba,[1] and tired myself as effectually in your dominions as I did you in mine upon a certain walk to the Rhymer's Glen. I had the offer of your pony, but the weather being too cold, I preferred walking. A cheerful little old gentleman, Mr. Birrel, and Mr. Grieg the clergyman, dined with us, and your health was not forgotten.—On my retreat (Border fashion) I brought away your pony and the little chaise, believing that both will be better under Peter Mathieson's charge than at Lochore, in case of its being let to strangers. Don't you think Jane's pony will be taken care of?

The day we arrived, the weather was gloomy, and rainy—the climate sorrowful for your absence, I suppose; the next, a fine sunny frost; the third, when I came off, so checkered with hail showers as to prevent a visit I had meditated to two very interesting persons in the neighborhood. "The Chief Commissioner and Charles Adam, I suppose?"—"Not a bit; guess again."

"Oh, Mr. Beaton of Contal, or Mr. Sym of Blair?"—"Not a bit; guess again."—"I won't guess any more."—Well, then, it was two honest gentlemen hewn in stone—some of the old knights of Lochore, who were described to me as lying under your gallery in the kirk; but as I had no reason to expect a warm reception from them, I put off my visit till some more genial season.

This puts me in mind of Warwick unvisited, and of my stupidity in not letting you know that the church is as well worth seeing as the castle, and you might have seen that, notwithstanding the badness of the morning. All the tombs of the mighty Beauchamps and Nevilles are to be seen there, in the most magnificent style of Gothic display, and in high preservation. However, this will be for another day, and you must comfort yourself that life has something still to show.

I trust you will soon find yourself at Edgeworthstown, where I know you will be received with open arms, for Miss Edgeworth's[1] kindness is equal to her distinguished talents.

This is a letter of formidable length, but our bargain is, long or short, just as the humor chances to be, and you are never to mend a pen or think upon a sentence, but write whatever comes readiest. My love to Walter. I am rather anxious to know if he has got his horses well over, and whether all his luggage has come safe. I am glad you have got a carriage to your mind; it is the best economy to get a good one at once. Above all, I shall be anxious to hear how you like the society of the ladies of the 15th. I know my Jane's quiet prudence

and good sense will save her from the risk of making sudden intimacies, and induce her to consider for a little while which of her new companions may suit her best; in the meanwhile being civil to all.

You see that I make no apology for writing silly letters; and why should you think that I can think yours stupid? There is not a *stupid* bit about them, nor any word, or so much as a comma, that is not interesting to me. Lady Scott and Anne send their kindest love to you, and grateful compliments to Mrs. Edgeworth, Miss Edgeworth, our friend Miss Harriet, and all the family of Edgeworthstown. Good-night, darling, and take good care of yourself.—I always remain your affectionate father,

WALTER SCOTT

2. *Sir Walter Scott to Mrs. Thomas Hughes*

ABBOTSFORD, February 5, 1826

MY DEAR MRS. HUGHES AND MY WORTHY DOCTOR:

I write immediately to give you the information which your kindness thinks of importance. I shall certainly lose a very large sum by the failure of my booksellers, whom all men considered as worth £150,000 and who I fear will not cut up, as they say, for one fourth of the money. But looking at the thing from the worst point of view I cannot see that I am entitled to claim the commiseration of any one, since I have made an arrangement for settling these affairs to the satisfaction of every party concerned so far as yet appears,

which leaves an income with me ample for all the comforts and many of the elegancies of life, and does not in the slightest degree innovate on any of my comforts.

So what title have I to complain? I am far richer in point of income than Generals and Admirals who have led fleets and armies to battle. My family are all provided for in present or in prospect, my estate remains in my family, my house and my books in my own possession. I shall give up my house in Edinburgh and retire to Abbotsford, where my wife and Anne will make their chief residence; during the time our courts sit, when I must attend, I will live at my club. If Anne wishes to see a little of the world in the gay season, they can have lodgings for two or three weeks; this plan we had indeed formed before it became imperative.

At Abbotsford we will cut off all hospitality, which latterly consumed all my time, which was worse than the expense; this I intended to do at any rate; we part with an extra servant or two, manage our household economically, and in five years, were the public to stand my friend, I should receive much more than I have lost. But if I only pay all demands I shall be satisfied.

I shall be anxious to dispose of Mr. Charles as soon as his second year of Oxford is ended. I think of trying to get him into some diplomatic line, for which his habits and manners seem to suit him well.

I might certainly have borrowed large sums. But to what good purpose? I must have owed that money, and a sense of obligation besides. Now, as I stand, the

Banks are extremely sensible that I have been the means of great advantages to their establishments and have afforded me all the facilities I can desire to make my payments; and as they gained by my prosperity, they are handsomely disposed to be indulgent to my adversity, and what can an honest man wish for more?

Many people will think that because I see company easily my pleasures depend on society. But this is not the case; I am by nature a very lonely animal, and enjoy myself at getting rid from a variety of things connected with public business, etc., which I did because they were fixed on me but I am particularly happy to be rid of. And now let the matter be at rest forever. It is a bad business, but might have been much worse.

I am my dear friends
Most truly yours,
WALTER SCOTT

XIV

Sydney Smith (1771–1845) inherited his talent and eccentricity from his father and his gaiety from his maternal grandfather, who was of French extraction. He was educated at Winchester and Oxford, and in 1796 was ordained priest. During his residence in London he was in great demand socially and became well known as a preacher and lecturer. Everything he wrote—sermons, essays, lectures, and letters—was characterized by vigor, picturesqueness, and liveliness. His wit and humor are proverbial. In 1809 he moved to a country parish where he had no educated neighbors within seven miles, but he won the hearts of his parishioners by his cheerful ministry. He said that doctoring his parishioners was his only rural amusement. His friends hoped he would be made a bishop, but he felt that his appointment was doubtful and forbade their efforts. He retained his high spirits, his wit, and power of good-natured ridicule to the last. The following letter shows him in a playful, whimsical mood.

Sydney Smith to Miss ———

London, July 22d, 1835

Lucy, Lucy, my dear child, don't tear your frock; tearing frocks is not of itself a proof of genius; but write as your mother writes, act as your mother acts; be frank, loyal, affectionate, simple, honest; and then integrity or laceration of frock is of little import.

And Lucy, dear child, mind your arithmetic. You know, in the first sum of yours I ever saw, there was a mistake. You had carried two (as a cab is licensed to do), and you ought, dear Lucy, to have carried but one.

Is this a trifle? What would life be without arithmetic but a scene of horrors?

You are going to Boulogne, the city of debts, peopled by men who never understood arithmetic; by the time you return, I shall probably have received my first paralytic stroke, and shall have lost all recollection of you; therefore I now give you my parting advice. Don't marry anybody who has not a tolerable understanding and a thousand a year, and God bless you, dear child.

SYDNEY SMITH

XV

Charles Lamb (1775–1834), essayist, critic, and letter-writer, had a wonderful capacity for friendship. He wrote voluminously and was fortunate in his correspondents. Between 1811 and 1820, he was "at home" on Wednesday and Thursday nights, entertaining his friends, making a reputation as a conversationalist, and inspiring conversation. For thirty-three years he was an accountant in the East India House, where he said his true "works" were produced. His letters show a refined and exquisite humor, a cordial vein of pleasantry, and at times a whimsical, nonsensical mood, that easily explain why his obscure apartment was the gathering place of such men as Coleridge, Manning, Hazlitt, and sometimes Wordsworth.

Miss Hutchinson, to whom he wrote, was a sister of Mrs. Wordsworth and took care of an invalid relation, Mrs. Monkhouse, at Ramsgate. The letter to Dibdin, an invalid staying at Hastings for his health, is in Lamb's characteristic mood. Thomas Manning travelled extensively and Lamb kept him informed about the old London circle of friends. Bernard Barton, the Quaker, was the fortunate recipient, not only of Lamb's letters, but of Fitzgerald's as well. Charles Lamb loved people, throngs of people, and the evidences of human activity. His affection for London was a passion. His letters show "the true inside of him."

1. *Charles Lamb to William Wordsworth*

Jan. 30th, 1801

I ought before this to have replied to your very kind invitation into Cumberland. With you and your sister I could gang anywhere; but I am afraid whether I shall ever be able to afford so desperate a journey.

Separate from the pleasure of your company, I don't much care, if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead Nature. The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street; the innumerable trades, tradesmen, and customers, coaches, waggons, play-houses; all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden; [1] the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles; life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night; the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street; the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print-shops, the old book-stalls, parsons cheapening [2] books, coffee-houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes —London itself a pantomime and a masquerade—all these things work themselves into my mind, and feed me, without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impels me into nightwalks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life. All these emotions must be strange to you; so are your rural emotions to me. But consider, what must I have been doing all my life, not to have lent great portions of my heart with usury to such scenes?

My attachments are all local, purely local. I have no passion (or have had none since I was in love, and then it was the spurious engendering of poetry and books), for groves and valleys. The rooms where I was born, the furniture which has been before my

eyes all my life, a book-case which has followed me about like a faithful dog, (only exceeding him in knowledge,) wherever I have moved, old chairs, old tables, streets, squares, where I have sunned myself, my old school,—these are my mistresses. Have I not enough, without your mountains? I do not envy you. I should pity you, did I not know that the mind will make friends of any thing. Your sun, and moon, and skies, and hills, and lakes, affect me no more, or scarcely come to me in more venerable characters, than as a gilded room with tapestry and tapers, where I might live with handsome visible objects. I consider the clouds above me but as a roof beautifully painted, but unable to satisfy the mind: and at last, like the pictures of the apartment of a connoisseur, unable to afford him any longer a pleasure. So fading upon me, from disuse, have been the beauties of Nature, as they have been confinedly called; so ever fresh, and green, and warm are all the inventions of men, and assemblies of men in this great city.

Give my kindest love, and my sister's, to D. and yourself; and a kiss from me to little Barbara Lewthwaite. Thank you for liking my play.

C. L.

2. *Charles Lamb to Thomas Manning*

24th Sept. 1802, London

My dear Manning,—

Since the date of my last letter I have been a traveller. A strong desire seized me of visiting remote

regions. My first impulse was to go and see Paris. It was a trivial objection to my aspiring mind, that I did not understand a word of the language, since I certainly intend some time in my life to see Paris, and equally certainly intend never to learn the language; therefore that could be no objection. However, I am very glad I did not go, because you had left Paris (I see) before I could have set out. I believe, Stoddart promising to go with me another year, prevented that plan.

My final resolve was, a tour to the Lakes. I set out with Mary to Keswick, without giving Coleridge any notice, for my time, being precious, did not admit of it. He received us with all the hospitality in the world, and gave up his time to show us all the wonders of the country. He dwells upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, in a comfortable house, quite enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains: great floundering bears and monsters they seemed, all couchant and asleep. We got in in the evening, travelling in a post-chaise from Penrith, in the midst of a gorgeous sunshine, which transmuted all the mountains into colours, purple, &c., &c. We thought we had got into fairy-land. But that went off, (as it never came again; while we stayed we had no more fine sunsets;) and we entered Coleridge's comfortable study just in the dusk, when the mountains were all dark with clouds upon their heads. Such an impression I never received from objects of sight before, nor do I suppose I can ever again. Glorious creatures, fine old fellows, Skiddaw,[1] &c. I never shall forget ye, how ye lay about that night, like

an intrenchment; gone to bed, as it seemed for the night, but promising that ye were to be seen in the morning. Coleridge had got a blazing fire in his study; which is a large antique, ill-shaped room, with an old-fashioned organ, never played upon, big enough for a church, shelves of scattered folios, an Æolian harp, and an old sofa, half bed, &c. And all looking out upon the last fading view of Skiddaw, and his broad-breasted brethren: what a night!

Here we stayed three full weeks, in which time I visited Wordsworth's cottage, where we stayed a day or two with the Clarksons, (good people, and most hospitable, at whose house we tarried one day and night,) and saw Lloyd.[1] The Wordsworths were gone to Calais. They have since been in London, and past much time with us: he is now gone into Yorkshire to be married. So we have seen Keswick, Grasmere, Ambleside, Ulswater, (where the Clarksons live,) and a place at the other end of Ulswater; I forget the name: to which we travelled on a very sultry day, over the middle of Helvellyn. We have clambered up to the top of Skiddaw, and I have waded up the bed of Lodore. In fine, I have satisfied myself that there is such a thing as that which tourists call *romantic*, which I very much suspected before: they make such a spluttering about it, and toss their splendid epithets around them, till they give as dim a light as at four o'clock next morning the lamps do after an illumination. Mary was excessively tired when she got about half-way up Skiddaw, but we came to a cold rill, (than which

nothing can be imagined more cold, running over cold stones,) and with the reinforcement of a draught of cold water she surmounted it most manfully. Oh, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a prospect of mountains all about and about, making you giddy; and then Scotland afar off, and the border countries so famous in song and ballad! It was a day that will stand out, like a mountain, I am sure in my life.

But I am returned, (I have now been come home near three weeks; I was a month out,) and you cannot conceive the degradation I felt at first, from being accustomed to wander free as air among mountains, and bathe in rivers without being controlled by any one, to come home and *work*. I felt very *little*. I had been dreaming I was a very great man. But that is going off, and I find I shall conform in time to that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me. Besides, after all, Fleet Street and the Strand are better places to live in for good and all than amidst Skiddaw. Still, I turn back to those great places where I wandered about, participating in their greatness. After all, I could not *live* in Skiddaw. I could spend a year, two, three years among them, but I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet Street at the end of that time, or I should mope and pine away, I know. Still, Skiddaw is a fine creature. Farewell. Write again quickly, for I shall not like to hazard a letter, not knowing where the fates have carried you. Farewell, my dear fellow.

C. LAMB

3. *Charles Lamb to Thomas Manning*

SOUTHAMPTON BUILDINGS,
28th March, 1809

DEAR MANNING,—

I sent you a long letter by the ships which sailed the beginning of last month, accompanied with books, &c. Since I last wrote Holcroft is dead. He died on Thursday last. So there is one of your friends whom you will never see again! Perhaps the next fleet may bring you a letter from Martin Burney, to say that he writes by desire of Miss Lamb, who is not well enough to write herself, to inform you that her brother died on Thursday last, 14th June, &c. But I hope *not*. I should be sorry to give occasion to open a correspondence between Martin and you. This letter must be short, for I have driven it off to the very moment of doing up the packets; and besides, that which I refer to above is a very long one; and if you have received my books, you will have enough to do to read them.

While I think on it, let me tell you, we are moved. Don't come any more to Mitre-Court Buildings. We are at 34, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, and shall be here till about the end of May; then we remove to No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, where I mean to live and die; for I have such horror of moving, that I would not take a benefice [1] from the King if I was not indulged with non-residence. What a dislocation of comfort is comprised in that word "moving!" Such a heap of little nasty things, after you think all is got into the

cart: old dredging-boxes, worn-out brushes, gallipots, vials, things that it is impossible the most necessitous person can ever want, but which the women, who preside on these occasions, will not leave behind if it was to save your soul. They'd keep the cart ten minutes to stow in dirty pipes and broken matches, to show their economy. Then you can find nothing you want for many days after you get into your new lodgings. You must comb your hair with your fingers, wash your hands without soap, go about in dirty gaiters. Were I Diogenes,[1] I would not move out of a kilderkin into a hogshead, though the first had had nothing but small beer in it, and the second reeked claret. Our place of final destination,—I don't mean the grave, but No. 4, Inner Temple Lane,—looks out upon a gloomy churchyard-like court, called Hare Court, with three trees and a pump in it. Do you know it? I was born near it, and used to drink at that pump when I was six years old.

I think I told you of Godwin's little book, and of Coleridge's prospectus in my last; if I did not, remind me of it, and I will send you them, or an account of them, next fleet. I have no conveniency of doing it by this. Mrs. —— grows every day in disfavour with me. I will be buried with this inscription over me:—"Here lies C. L., the woman-hater:" I mean that hated one woman: for the rest, God bless them! How do you like the Mandarinesses? [2] Are you on some little footing with any of them? This is Wednesday. On Wednesdays is my levee. The Captain, Martin, Phillips, (not

the Sheriff,) Rickman, and some more, are constant attendants, besides stray visitors. We play at whist, eat cold meat and hot potatoes, and any gentleman that chooses smokes. Why do you never drop in? You'll come some day, won't you?

C. Lamb

4. *Charles Lamb to Miss Hutchinson*

[April 25, 1823]

Dear Miss H.,—

Mary has such an invincible reluctance to any epistolary exertion, that I am sparing her a mortification by taking the pen from her. The plain truth is, she writes such a pimping, mean, detestable hand, that she is ashamed of the formation of her letters. There is an essential poverty and abjectness in the frame of them. They look like begging letters. And then she is sure to omit a most substantial word in the second draught, (for she never ventures an epistle without a foul copy first,) which is obliged to be interlined; which spoils the neatest epistle, you know. Her figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, &c., where she has occasion to express numerals, as in the date, (25th April 1823,) are not figures, but figurantes; [1] and the combined posse go staggering up and down shameless, as drunkards in the day-time. It is no better when she rules her paper. Her lines "are not less erring" than her words. A sort of unnatural parallel lines, that are perpetually threatening to meet; which, you know, is quite contrary to Euclid.[2] Her

very blots are not bold like this, [*here a large blot is inserted,*] but poor smears, half left in and half scratched out, with another smear left in their place. I like a clear letter; a bold free hand, and a fearless flourish. Then she has always to go through them (a second operation) to dot her *i's*, and cross her *t's*. I don't think she can make a corkscrew if she tried, which has such a fine effect at the end or middle of an epistle, and fills up.

There is a corkscrew!—one of the best I ever drew. But if I am to write a letter, let me begin, and not stand flourishing, like a fencer at a fair.

April 25th 1823

Dear Miss H.,—It gives me great pleasure (the letter now begins) to hear that you got down so smoothly, and that Mrs. Monkhouse's spirits are so good and enterprising. It shows whatever her posture may be, that her mind at least is not supine. I hope the excursion will enable the former to keep pace with its outstripping neighbour. Pray present our kindest wishes to her and all; (that sentence should properly have come into the Postscript, but we airy mercurial spirits, there is no keeping us in). "Time" (as was said of one of us) "toils after us in vain." I am afraid our co-visit with Coleridge was a dream. I shall not get away before the end (or middle) of June, and then you will be frog-hopping at Boulogne; and besides, I think the Gilmans would scarce trust him with us; I have a malicious knack at cutting of apron-strings. The Saints' days you speak of have long since fled to heaven, with Astræa,[1] and the cold piety of the age

lacks fervour to recall them; only Peter left his key—the iron one of the two that "shuts amain"[1]—and that is the reason I am locked up. Meanwhile of afternoons we pick up primroses at Dalston, and Mary corrects me when I call 'em cowslips. God bless you all; and pray remember me euphoniously to Mr. Gruvellegan. That Lee Priory must be a dainty bower. Is it built of flints?—and does it stand at Kingsgate?

5. *Charles Lamb to Bernard Barton*

January 9, 1824

Dear B. B.,—

Do you know what it is to succumb under an insurmountable day-mare, an indisposition to do any thing, or to be any thing,—a total deadness and distaste—a suspension of vitality,—an indifference to locality,—a numb, soporifical, good-for-nothingness—an ossification all over,—an oyster-like insensibility to the passing events,—a mind-stupor,—a brawny defiance to the needles of a thrusting-in-conscience—did you ever have a very bad cold with a total irresolution to submit to water-gruel processes? This has been for many weeks my lot and my excuse—my fingers drag heavily over this paper, and to my thinking it is three-and-twenty furlongs from here to the end of this demi-sheet—I have not a thing to say—nothing is of a more importance than another—I am flatter than a denial or a pancake—emptier than Judge Park's wig when the head is in it—duller than a country stage when the

actors are off it—a cipher—an o—I acknowledge life at all only by an occasional convulsional cough, and a permanent phlegmatic pain in the chest—I am weary of the world—Life is weary of me. My day is gone into Twilight, and I don't think it worth the expense of candles—my wick hath a thief in it, but I can't muster courage to snuff it—I inhale suffocation—I can't distinguish veal from mutton—nothing interests me—'tis 12 o'clock, if you told me the world will be at an end to-morrow, I should just say, "will it?"—I have not volition enough left to dot my i's—much less to comb my eyebrows—my eyes are set in my head—my brains are gone out to see a poor relation in Moorfields, and they did not say when they'd come back again—my skull is a Grub Street [1] Attic, to let—not so much as a joint-stool left in it—my hand writes, not I, from habit, as chickens run about a little when their heads are off—O for a vigorous fit of gout, toothache,—an earwig in my auditory, a fly in my visual organs—pain is life—the sharper, the more evidence of life—but this apathy, this death—did you ever have an obstinate cold, a six or seven weeks' unintermitting chill and suspension of hope, fear, conscience, and every thing—yet I try all I can to cure it, I try wine, and spirits, and smoking, and snuff in unsparing quantities, but they all only seem to make me worse, instead of better—I sleep in a damp room, but it does me no good; I come home late o' nights, but do not find any visible amendment.

Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

C. L.

6. *Charles Lamb to J. B. Dibdin*

Saturday, September 9, 1826

An answer is requested

DEAR D.,—

I have observed that a letter is never more acceptable than when received upon a rainy day, especially a rainy Sunday; which moves me to send you somewhat, however short. This will find you sitting after breakfast, which you will have prolonged as far as you can with consistency to the poor handmaid that has the reversion of the tea leaves; making two nibbles of your last morsel of *stale* roll (you cannot have hot new ones on the Sabbath), and reluctantly coming to an end, because when that is done what can you do till dinner? You cannot go to the beach, for the rain is drowning the sea, turning rank Thetis [1] fresh, taking the brine out of Neptune's pickles, while mermaids sit upon rocks with umbrellas, their ivory combs sheathed for spoiling in the wet of waters foreign to them. You cannot go to the library, for it's shut. You are not religious enough to go to church. O it is worth while to cultivate piety to the gods, to have something to fill up the heart on a wet Sunday! You cannot cast accounts, for your ledger is being eaten with moths in the Ancient Jewry. You cannot play at draughts, for there is none to play with you, and besides there is not a draught-board in the house. You cannot go to market, for it closed last night. You cannot look into the shops, their backs are shut upon you. You cannot

read the Bible, for it is not good reading for the sick and the hypochondriacal.[1] You cannot while away an hour with a friend, for you have no friend round that Wrekin. You cannot divert yourself with a stray acquaintance, for you have picked none up. You cannot bear the chiming of bells, for they invite you to a banquet where you are no visitant. You cannot cheer yourself with the prospect of tomorrow's letter, for none come on Mondays. You cannot count those endless vials on the mantlepiece with any hope of making a variation in their numbers. You have counted your spiders: your Bastile[2] is exhausted.

You sit and deliberately curse your hard exile from all familiar sights and sounds. Anything to deliver you from this intolerable weight of ennui. You are too ill to shake it off: not ill enough to submit to it, and to lie down as a lamb under it. The tyranny of sickness is nothing to the cruelty of convalescence: 'tis to have thirty tyrants for one. That pattering rain drops on your brain. You'll be worse after dinner, for you must dine at one to-day, that Betty may go to afternoon service. She insists upon having her chopped hay. And then when she goes out, who *was* something to you, something to speak to—what an interminable afternoon you'll have to go thro'. You can't break yourself from your locality: you cannot say "tomorrow I set off for Banstead," for you are booked for Wednesday.

Foreseeing this, I thought a *cheerful letter* would come in opportunely. If any of the little topics for mirth I

have thought upon should serve you in this utter extinguishment of sunshine, to make you a little merry, I shall have had my ends. I love to make things comfortable. . . . This, which is scratched out was the most material thing I had to say, but on maturer thoughts I defer it.

P. S. We are just sitting down to dinner with a pleasant party, Coleridge, Reynolds the dramatist, and Sam Bloxam: tomorrow (that is *today*), Liston, and Wyat of the Wells, dine with us. May this find you as jolly and freakish as we mean to be.

C. Lamb

XVI

In describing English country life or the Moorish civilization in Spain, Washington Irving (1783–1859) is equally pleasing, whether writing books for the public or letters to familiar friends. He writes with a smoothness, ease, and grace characteristic of Addison, whom he took for his literary master. Mademoiselle Bollviller was a niece of Madame D'Oubril, the wife of the Russian Minister to Spain, in whose home Irving was a favorite guest during his stay in Madrid.

6. *Washington Irving to Mademoiselle Bollviller*

Seville, May 28, 1828

I have suffered some time to elapse, my dear Mademoiselle Antoinette, without replying to your charming letter, but I have had a long arrearage of letters to pay off to correspondents in Europe and America and many lie by me yet unanswered. O! this continually accumulating debt of correspondence! It grows while we sleep, and recurs as fast as we can pay it off. Would that I had the turn and taste for letter-writing of our friend the prince,[1] to whom it seems a perfect delight; who, like an industrious spider, can sit in that little dark room and spin out a web of pleasant fancies from his own brain; or rather, to make a more gracious comparison, like a honey bee goes humming about the world, and when he has visited every flower, returns buzz-buzz to his little hive, and works all that he has

collected into a perfect honey-comb of a letter. For my part, I know no greater delight than to receive letters; but the replying to them is a grievous tax upon my negligent nature. I sometimes think one of the greatest blessings we shall enjoy in heaven, will be to receive letters by every post and never be obliged to reply to them.

Do not think, however, that what I have said applies to my correspondence with you; or with that truly good boy, the prince. With me it is in letter-writing as in conversation, I must feel a particular interest in a person to be able to acquit myself with any degree of attention and animation in either; but there are those with whom it is a real pleasure, both to converse and to correspond. It is the number of uninteresting persons with whom one must keep up correspondence and conversation of mere civility that makes a toil of the common intercourse of life.

You tell me you have been at a bull-fight, and that you have renounced all amusements of the kind forever. I should be much mistaken in the opinion I have formed of you, could you really relish those barbarous spectacles. Depend upon it, it is neither the better nor the braver parts of our nature that is gratified by them. There appears to me a mixture of cowardice and ferocity in looking on in selfish security and enjoying the perils and sufferings of others. The "divinity that dwells within us" has nothing to do with pleasures of the kind; they belong to our earthly, our gross and savage nature. I have sunk considerably in my own estima-

tion since I have found I could derive gratification from these sights; I should have been grieved to find you as bad in this respect as myself.

I am sorry to hear that you are to pass your summer in Madrid. What a pity that the diplomatic circle should be doomed to the sterile monotony of that city of the desert; what a residence this Seville might be made for a court! Such a heavenly climate and delightful neighbourhood; such fine rides, such pleasant country retreats, such water excursions on the Guadalquiver! I have visited some lovely places in the vicinity; and whenever I find any situation peculiarly delicious, I am sure to find that it has been a favourite resort of those noble fellows, the Moors.

I made an excursion a few days since down the Guadalquiver to an old convent, called S. Juan de Alfarache, which is built among the ruins of a Moorish castle, and I dined at a country seat in the neighbourhood, which had been the retreat of some Moorish family. You cannot imagine scenery more soft, graceful, luxuriant, and beautiful. These retreats are built along the side of a ridge of hills overlooking the fertile valley of the Guadalquiver, and the serpentine windings of that river, with Seville and the towers rising at a distance, and the Ronda mountains bounding the landscape. But consider all this ridge of hills and the valley immediately below you a perfect garden, filled with oranges, citrons, figs, grapes, pomegranates; hedged by the aloe and the Indian fig in blossom; the whole country covered with flowers, such as in other

countries are raised in hot-houses, but here growing wild; for the very weeds are flowers and aromatic plants. Fancy all this lovely landscape rendered fresh and sweet by recent showers, the soft air loaded with fragrance and the hum of bees on every side, and the songs of thousands of nightingales reminding you of spring-time and the season of flowers.

In these country-seats one continually meets with the relics of Moorish labour and Moorish taste; channels cut into the sides of the hills, through the living rock, in search of choice springs of cold and delicate water, and basins and fountains to collect it and to cool the courts and halls of the mansions.

Nothing can be more charming than the windings of the little river among banks hanging with gardens and orchards of all kinds of delicate southern fruits, and tufted with flowers and aromatic plants. The nightingales throng this lovely little valley. Every bend of the river presents a new landscape, for it is beset by old Moorish mills of the most picturesque forms; each mill having an embattled tower—a memento of the valiant tenure by which those gallant fellows, the Moors, held this earthly paradise, having to be ready at all times for war, and as it were to work with one hand and fight with the other. It is impossible to travel about Andalusia and not imbibe a kind feeling for those Moors. They deserved this beautiful country. They won it bravely; they enjoyed it generously and kindly. No lover ever delighted more to cherish and adorn a mistress, to heighten and illustrate her charms, and to

vindicate and defend her against all the world than did the Moors to embellish, enrich, elevate, and defend their beloved Spain. Everywhere I meet traces of their sagacity, courage, urbanity, high poetical feeling, and elegant taste. The noblest institutions in this part of Spain, the best inventions for comfortable and agreeable living, and all those habitudes and customs which throw a peculiar and oriental charm over the Andalusian mode of living, may be traced to the Moors.

Whenever I enter these beautiful marble patios, set out with shrubs and flowers, refreshed by fountains, sheltered with awnings from the sun; where the air is cool at noonday, the ear delighted in sultry summer by the sound of falling water; where, in a word, a little paradise is shut up within the walls of home—I think on the poor Moors, the inventors of all these delights. I am at times almost ready to join in sentiment with a worthy friend and countryman of mine whom I met in Malaga, who swears the Moors are the only people that ever deserved the country, and prays to heaven they may come over from Africa and conquer it again.

You promise to give me the news of the gay world of Madrid. I shall be delighted to receive it from you, but you need not go out of the walls of your own house to find subjects full of interest for me. Let me have all the news you can of your domestic circle; you have a world within yourselves; at least it was all the world to me while at Madrid. The prince talks something of coming to Seville. Is there any probability of it? I should mark the day of his arrival with a white stone,

and would be delighted to be his cicerone. I would give all the money in my pocket to be with those dear little women at the round table in the saloon, or on the grass-plot in the garden, to tell them some marvellous tales.

Give my kind remembrance to M. and Madame D'Oubril, and to all the household, large and small. Tell my little Marie I kiss her hand and hold myself her loyal and devoted knight. If she wishes at any time the head of a giant or the tail of a fiery dragon, she has but to call upon me. My arm and my court sword are always at her command.

With the greatest regard, your friend,

WASHINGTON IRVING

2. *Washington Irving to Mrs. Paris*

NEWSTEAD ABBEY, January 20, 1832

MY DEAR SISTER:—

Upwards of a month since I left London with Mr. Van Buren and his son, on a tour to show them some interesting places in the interior, and to give them an idea of English country life, and the festivities of an old-fashioned English Christmas. We posted in an open carriage, as the weather was uncommonly mild, and beautiful for the season. Our first stopping place was Oxford, to visit the noble collegiate buildings; and thence we went to Blenheim, and visited the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, one of the finest palaces in England. We next passed a night and part of the next

day at Stratford-on-Avon,. visiting the house where Shakespeare was born and the church where he lies buried. We were quartered at the little inn of the Red Horse, where I found the same obliging little landlady that kept it at the time of the visit recorded in the *Sketch Book*. You cannot imagine what a fuss the little woman made when she found out who I was. She showed me the room I had occupied, in which she had hung up my engraved likeness, and she produced a poker which was locked up in the archives of her house, on which she had caused to be engraved "Geoffrey Crayon's Sceptre."

From Stratford we went to Warwick Castle, Kenilworth, and then to Birmingham, where we passed a part of three days; continuing our tour, we visited Lichfield and its beautiful cathedral, Derby, Nottingham, Newstead Abbey, Hardwick Castle, etc., etc., and finally arrived on Christmas eve at Barlborough Hall, where we had engaged to remain during the holidays. Here, then, we passed a fortnight, during which the old hall was a complete scene of old English hospitality. Many of the ancient games and customs, obsolete in other parts of England, are still maintained in that part of the country, and are encouraged by Mr. Rodes. We accordingly had mummers, and morris dancers, and glee singers from the neighbouring villages; and great feasting, with the boar's head crowned with holly; the wassail bowl, the yule log, snapdragon, etc., etc. There was dancing by night in the grand tapestried apartments, and dancing in the servants' hall, and all

kinds of merriment. The whole was to have wound up by a grand fancy ball on Twelfth Night, to which all the gentry of the neighbourhood were invited, when Mr. Rodes received news of the death of a relative, which put an end to the festivities.

After leaving the hospitable mansion of Mr. Rodes we came to Newstead Abbey, on an invitation from Col. Wildman, the present proprietor. Mr. Van Buren and his son remained but a couple of days, but I was easily prevailed upon to prolong my visit, and have now been here about a fortnight; and never has time passed away more delightfully. I have found Col. Wildman a most estimable man, warmhearted, generous, and amiable, and his wife charming both in character and person. The abbey I have already mentioned to you in a former letter as being the ancestral mansion of Lord Byron, and mentioned frequently in his writings. I occupy his room, and the very bed in which he slept. The edifice is a fine mixture of the convent and the palace, being an ancient abbey of friars granted by Henry VIII to the Byron family. At one end is the ruin of the abbey church, the Gothic front still standing in fine preservation and overrun with ivy. My room immediately adjoins it, and hard by is a dark grove filled with rooks, who are continually wheeling and cawing about the building. What was once the interior of the church is now a grassy lawn with gravel walks, and where the high altar stood is the monument erected by Lord Byron to his dog, in which he intended his own body should be deposited.

The interior of the abbey is a complete labyrinth. There are the old monkish cloisters, dim and damp, surrounding a square, in the centre of which is a grotesque Gothic fountain. Then there are long corridors hung with portraits, and set out with figures in armour, that look like spectres. There are ancient state apartments that have been occupied by some of the British sovereigns in their progresses, and which still bear their names. These have been restored by Col. Wildman, with great taste, and are hung with ancient tapestry and quaintly furnished. There are large halls, also, some splendidly restored, others undergoing repairs; with long vaulted chambers that have served for refectories and dormitories to the monks in old times. Behind the edifice is the ancient abbey garden, with great terraced walks, balustrades, fish ponds, formal flower plots, etc., all kept up in admirable style, and suiting the venerable appearance of the building.

You may easily imagine the charms of such a residence connected with the poetical associations with the memory of Lord Byron. The solemn and monastic look of many parts of the edifice, also, has a most mysterious and romantic effect, and has given rise to many superstitious fables among the servants and the neighbouring peasantry. They have a story of a friar in black who haunts the cloisters, and is said to have been seen by Lord Byron. He certainly alludes to him in his poems. Then there is a female in white, who appeared in the bedroom of a young lady, a cousin of Lord Byron, coming through the wall on one side

of the room, and going into the wall on the other side. Besides these there is "Sir John Byron, the little, with the great beard," the first proprietor of the abbey, whose portrait in black hangs up in the drawing-room. He has been seen by a young lady visitor, sitting by the fire-place of one of the state apartments, reading out of a great book. I could mention other stories of the kind, but these are sufficient to show you that this old building is more than usually favoured by ghosts.

We are here in the centre of Robin Hood's country, what once was merry Sherwood forest, though now it is an open country. There are some tracts of the forest, however, remaining in ancient wildness, with immense oaks several hundred years old, mostly shattered and hollow, and inhabited by jackdaws. I have rode through the green glades of these monumental forests, and pictured to myself Robin Hood and all his renowned band of outlaws; and I have visited many points of the neighbourhood which still bear traces of him, such as Robin Hood's chair, Robin Hood's stable, his well, etc., etc., and I have the line of Robin Hood's hills in view from the windows of my apartment. I am thus in the midst of a poetical region.

I shall remain here a few days longer and then return to London, to attend to my literary affairs, which from various circumstances have been a little retarded. Give my love to all your household. Ever most affectionately your brother,

W. I.

XVII

Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786–1846) was an historical painter, who wrote as delightfully as he talked. In fact, his letters are talks with his friends, expressed with clearness and vigor. He had a brilliant and erratic career, full of unfortunate conflicts with the Royal Academy. Among his friends were Scott, Keats, Lamb, Wordsworth, Smithey, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, Benjamin West, Miss Mitford, Miss Joanna Baillie, and Mrs. Siddons. Some of his famous pictures are "The Judgment of Solomon," "Macbeth," and "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem."

Benjamin Robert Haydon to Miss Mitford

18th August, 1826

How do you find yourself? I heard you were poorly. What are you about? I was happy to hear of ———'s safe arrival again, and I shall be most happy to see him, though tell him he will find no more "Solomons" towering up as a background to our conversations. Nothing but genteel-sized drawing-room pocket-history —Alexander [1] in a nutshell; Bucephalus no bigger than a Shetland pony, and my little girl's doll a giantess to my Olympias!

The other night I paid my butcher; one of the miracles of these times, you will say. Let me tell you I have all my life been seeking for a butcher whose respect for genius predominated over his love of gain. I could not make out, before I dealt with this man, his excessive desire that I should be his customer; his sly hints as I

passed his shop that he had "a bit of South Down, very fine; a sweetbread, perfection; and a calf's foot that was all jelly without bone!"

The other day he called, and I had him sent up into the painting-room. I found him in great admiration of "Alexander." "Quite alive, Sir!" "I am glad you think so," said I. "Yes, Sir, but, as I have said often to my sister, you could not have painted that picture, Sir, if you had not eat my meat, Sir!" "Very true, Mr. Sowerby." "Ah! Sir, I have a fancy for *genus*, Sir!" "Have you, Mr. Sowerby?" "Yes, Sir; Mrs. Siddons, Sir, has eat my meat, Sir; never was *such a woman for chops*, Sir!"—and he drew up his beefy, shiny face, clean shaved, with a clean blue cravat under his chin, a clean jacket, a clean apron, and a pair of hands that would pin an ox to the earth if he was obstreperous—"Ah! Sir, she was a wonderful crayture!" "She was, Mr. Sowerby." "Ah, Sir, when she used to act that there character, you see (but Lord, such a head! as I used to say to my sister)—that there woman, Sir, that murders a king between 'em!" "Oh! Lady Macbeth." "Ah, Sir, that's it—Lady Macbeth—I used to get up with the butler behind her carridge when she acted, and, as I used to see her looking quite wild, and all the people quite frightened, 'Ah, ha! my lady,' said I, 'if it wasn't for my meat, though, you wouldn't be able to do *that!*'" "Mr. Sowerby, you seem to be a man of feeling; will you take a glass of wine?" After a bow or two, down he sat, and by degrees his heart opened. "You see, Sir, I have fed

Mrs. Siddons, Sir; John Kemble, Sir; Charles Kemble, Sir; Stephen Kemble, Sir; and Madame Catalani, Sir; Morland the painter, and, I beg your pardon, Sir, and *you*, Sir." "Mr. Sowerby, you do me honour." "Madame Catalani, Sir, was a wonderful woman for sweetbreads; but the Kemble family, Sir, the gentlemen, Sir, rump-steaks and kidneys in general was their taste; but Mrs. Siddons, Sir, she liked chops, Sir, as much as you do, Sir," &c. &c.

I soon perceived that the man's ambition was to feed genius. I shall recommend you to him; but is he not a capital fellow? But a little acting with his remarks would make you roar with laughter. Think of Lady Macbeth eating chops! Is this not a peep behind the curtain? I remember Wilkie saying that at a public dinner he was looking out for some celebrated man, when at last he caught a glimpse for the first time of a man whose books he had read with care for years, picking the leg of a roast goose, perfectly abstracted!

Never will I bring up my boys to any profession that is not a matter of necessary want to the world. Painting, unless considered as it ought to be, is a mere matter of ornament and luxury. It is not yet taken up as it should be in a wealthy country like England, and all those who devote themselves to the higher branches of Art must suffer the penalty, as I have done, and am doing. So I was told, and to no purpose. I opposed my father, my mother, and my friends, though I am duly gratified by my fame in the obscurest corners. Last week a book-stall keeper showed me one of my

own books at his stall, and, by way of recommending it, pointed out a sketch of my own on the fly-leaf, "Which," said he, "I suppose is by Haydon himself. Ah! Sir, he was badly used [1]—a disgrace to our great men." "But he was impudent," said I. "Impudent!" said he. "Yes, of course; he depended on their taste and generosity too much." "Have you any more of his books?" said I. "Oh! I had a great many; but I have sold them all, Sir, but this, and another that I will never part with."

XVIII

GEORGE PEABODY (1795–1869), American philanthropist, amassed a fortune in the mercantile business. He was generous in his benefactions, and especially endeared himself to the South by his gifts to the Peabody Educational Fund to promote education in the southern states. He expended £500,000 for the erection of dwelling-houses for the working classes in London. His letter to Queen Victoria, who offered him a baronetcy, breathes the spirit of American democracy and is characteristic of the best type of New Englander.

1. *Queen Victoria to George Peabody*

WINDSOR CASTLE, March 28, 1866

The Queen hears that Mr. Peabody intends shortly to return to America; and she would be sorry that he should leave England without being assured by herself how deeply she appreciates the noble act, of more than princely munificence, by which he has sought to relieve the wants of her poorer subjects in London. It is an act, as the Queen believes, wholly without parallel; and which will carry its best reward in the consciousness of having contributed so largely to the assistance of those who can little help themselves.

The Queen would not, however, have been satisfied without giving Mr. Peabody some public mark of her sense of his munificence; and she would gladly have conferred upon him either a baronetcy or the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, but that she under-

stands Mr. Peabody to feel himself debarred from accepting such distinctions.

It only remains, therefore, for the Queen to give Mr. Peabody this assurance of her personal feelings; which she would further wish to mark by asking him to accept a miniature portrait of herself, which she will desire to have painted for him, and when finished, can either be sent to him in America, or given to him on the return which she rejoices to hear he meditates to the country that owes him so much.

2. *George Peabody to Queen Victoria*

THE PALACE HOTEL,
BUCKINGHAM GATE,
LONDON, April 3, 1866

MADAM:—

I feel sensibly my inability to express in adequate terms the gratification with which I have read the letter which your Majesty has done me the high honour of transmitting by the hands of Earl Russell.

On the occasion which has attracted your Majesty's attention, of setting apart a portion of my property to ameliorate the condition and augment the comforts of the poor of London, I have been actuated by a deep sense of gratitude to God, who has blessed me with prosperity, and of attachment to this great country, where, under your Majesty's benign rule, I have received so much personal kindness, and enjoyed so many years of happiness. Next to the approval of

my own conscience, I shall always prize the assurance which your Majesty's letter conveys to me of the approbation of the Queen of England, whose whole life has attested that her exalted station has in no degree diminished her sympathy with the humblest of her subjects. The portrait which your Majesty is graciously pleased to bestow on me I shall value as the most gracious heirloom that I can leave in the land of my birth: where, together with the letter which your Majesty has addressed to me, it will ever be regarded as an evidence of the kindly feeling of the Queen of the United Kingdom toward a citizen of the United States.

I have the honour to be
Your Majesty's most obedient servant,
GEORGE PEABODY

XIX

George Gordon, Lord Byron, (1788–1824) was a "rhyming peer." In 1816 he left England, never to return, and settled first at Geneva, where he made the acquaintance of Shelley. Some of his best work was written in Venice, Ravenna, and Pisa, where he spent two years in close intimacy with Shelley. In 1823 Byron sailed from Genoa for Greece, to take active part in the liberation of that country from Turkish rule. He died of fever at Missolonghi. One of his most intimate friends was Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, to whom he wrote long and frequent letters. Perhaps his strongest attachment was for his sister, the Honorable Augusta Leigh.

1. *Lord Byron to Thomas Moore*

Here's to her who long
  Hath waked the poet's sigh!
The girl who gave to song
  What gold could never buy.

Newstead Abbey, Sept. 20, 1814

My dear Moore,

I am going to be married—that is, I am accepted, and one usually hopes the rest will follow. You will think her too strait-laced for me, although the paragon of only children, and invested with "golden opinions of all sorts of men," and "full of most blest conditions" as Desdemona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I have her father's invitation to proceed there in my elect capacity,—which, however, I cannot do till I have settled some business in London and got a blue coat.

She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really know

nothing certainly, and shall not enquire. But I do know, that she has talents and excellent qualities; and you will not deny her judgment, after having refused six suitors and taken me.

Now, if you have any thing to say against this, pray do; my mind's made up, positively fixed, determined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break it off, but I will hope not. In the meantime, I tell you (*a secret*, by the by,—at least, till I know she wishes it to be public) that I have proposed and am accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me joy, for one mayn't be married for months. I am going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on my way there, within a fortnight.

If this had not happened, I should have gone to Italy. On my way down, perhaps, you will meet me at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure. I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously, if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure my own. She is so good a person, that—that—in short, I wish I was a better.

Ever, etc.

2. *Lord Byron to the Honorable Augusta Leigh*

BRUXELLES, Wednesday,
May 1st, 1816

MY HEART,

We are detained here for some petty carriage repairs, having come out of our way to the Rhine on purpose,

after passing through Ghent, Antwerp, and Mechlin. I have written to you twice,—once from Ostend, and again from Ghent. I hope most truly that you will receive my letters, not as important in themselves, but because you wish it, and so do I. It would be difficult for me to write anything amusing; this country has been so frequently described, and has so little for description, though a good deal for observation, that I know not what to say of it, and one don't like talking only of oneself. We saw at Antwerp the famous basons [1] of Bonaparte, for his navy, which are very superb—as all his undertakings were, and as for churches, and pictures, I have stared at them till my brains are like a guide book:—the last (though it is heresy to say so) don't please me at all. I think Rubens [2] a very great dauber, and prefer Vandyke a hundred times over (but then I know nothing about the matter).

As the Low Countries did not make part of my plan (except as a route), I feel a little anxious to get out of them. Level roads don't suit me, as thou knowest; it must be up hill or down, and then I am more *au fait*.[3] Imagine to yourself a succession of avenues with a Dutch spire at the end of each, and you see the road;—an accompaniment of highly cultivated farms on each side, intersected with small canals or ditches, and sprinkled with very neat and clean cottages, a village every two miles,—and you see the country; not a rise from Ostend to Antwerp—a mole hill would make the inhabitants think that the Alps had come here on a visit; it is a perpetuity of plain and an eternity of *pave-*

ment (on the *road*), but it is a country of great apparent comfort, and of singular though *tame* beauty, and, were it not out of my way, I should like to survey it less cursorily. The towns are wonderfully fine. The approach to Brussels is beautiful, and there is a fine palace to the right in coming. [Here the sheet ends.]

XX

In 1818 Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) left England for Italy, where he resided mainly at Naples, Leghorn, and Pisa. He was drowned in the Gulf of Spezia, July 8, 1822. Byron, also, spent much of his life in Italy; the following letter gives a glimpse of his peculiarities. Shelley felt that the death of Keats was hastened by harsh reviews in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Quarterly Review*, and wrote the famous elegy, *Adonais*, mourning the poet's untimely death.

Percy Bysshe Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock

Ravenna, August, 1821

My dear Peacock,—

I received your last letter just as I was setting off from the Bagni on a visit to Lord Byron at this place. Many thanks for all your kind attention to my accursed affairs.[1] I am happy to tell you that my income is satisfactorily arranged, although Horace Smith having received it, and being still on his slow journey through France, I cannot send you, as I wished to have done, the amount of my debt immediately, but must defer it till I see him or till my September quarter, which is now very near. I am very much obliged to you for your way of talking about it—but of course, if I cannot do you any good, I will not permit you to be a sufferer by me.

I have sent you by the Gisbornes a copy of the "Elegy on Keats." The subject, I know, will not please

you; but the composition of the poetry and the taste in which it is written, I do not think bad. You and the enlightened public will judge. Lord Byron is in excellent tone both of health and spirits. He has got rid of all those melancholy and degrading habits which he indulged at Venice. He has written three more cantos of *Don Juan*. I have yet only heard the fifth, and I think that every word of it is pregnant with immortality. I have not seen his late plays, except *Marino Faliero*, which is very well, but not so transcendently fine as the *Don Juan*. Lord Byron gets up at *two*. I get up, quite contrary to my usual custom, but one must sleep or die, like Southey's sea-snake in *Kehama*, at 12. After breakfast we sit talking till six. From six till eight we gallop through the pine forests which divide Ravenna from the sea; we then come home and dine, and sit up gossiping until six in the morning. I don't suppose this will kill me in a week or fortnight, but I shall not try it longer. Lord B.'s establishment consists, besides servants, of ten horses, eight enormous dogs, three monkeys, five cats, an eagle, a crow, and a falcon; and all these, except the horses, walk about the house, which every now and then resounds with their unarbitrated quarrels, as if they were the masters of it.

Lord B. thinks you wrote a pamphlet signed "John Bull"; he says he knew it by the style resembling *Melincourt*, of which he is a great admirer. I read it, and assured him that it could not possibly be yours. I write nothing, and probably shall write no more. It offends me to see my name classed among those who

have no name. If I cannot be something better, I had rather be nothing, and the accursed cause[1] to the downfall of which I dedicate what powers I may have had flourishes like a cedar and covers England with its boughs. My motive was never the insane desire of fame; and if I should continue an author, I feel that I should desire it. This cup is justly given to one only of an age; indeed, participation would make it worthless: and unfortunate they who seek it and find it not.

My regards to Hogg, and Coulson if you see him.

Ever most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

After I have sealed my letter, I find that my enumeration of the animals in this Circean Palace[2] was defective, and that in a material point. I have just met on the grand staircase five peacocks, two guinea hens, and an Egyptian crane. I wonder who all these animals were before they were changed into these shapes.

XXI

The following letter shows John Keats (1795–1821) as a happy-hearted youth, traveling through Devonshire, in Scotland, seeing the humorous side of travel, and regaling his friends and family with his laughable experiences. The familiar picture of Keats is that of a sensitive poet, smarting under adverse reviews, seeking Italy to stay the development of consumption. He died at the age of twenty-five and was buried in Rome. On his gravestone is the inscription which he himself told his friend Severn to place there: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

1. *John Keats to Benjamin Bailey*

Teignmouth,
Friday [13 March 1818]

My dear Bailey,

When a poor devil is drowning, it is said he comes thrice to the surface ere he makes his final sink. If, however, even at the third rise he can manage to catch hold of a piece of weed or rock he stands a fair chance, as I hope I do now, of being saved. I have sunk twice in correspondence, have risen twice, and have been too idle, or something worse, to extricate myself. I have sunk the third time, and just now risen again at two of the clock P. M., and saved myself from utter perdition by beginning this, all drenched as I am, and fresh from the water. And I would rather endure the present inconvenience of a wet jacket than you should keep a laced one in store for me. Why did I not stop at Oxford

in my way? How can you ask such a question? Why, did I not promise to do so? Did I not, in a letter to you, make a promise to do so? Then how can you be so unreasonable as to ask me why I did not? This is the thing—(for I have been rubbing up my invention—trying several sleights—I first polished a cold, felt it in my fingers, tried it on the table, but could not pocket it:—I tried chilblains, rheumatism, gout, tight boots—nothing of that sort would do,—so this is, as I was going to say, the thing)—I had a letter from Tom, saying how much better he had got, and thinking he had better stop. I went down to prevent his coming up. Will not this do? Turn it which way you like—it is selvaged all round. I have used it these last three days, to keep out the abominable Devonshire weather. By the by, you may say what you will of Devonshire: the truth is, it is a splashy, rainy, misty, snowy, foggy, haily, floody, muddy, slipshod county. The hills are very beautiful, when you get a sight of 'em—the primroses are out, but then you are in—the cliffs are of a fine deep colour, but then the clouds are continually vieing with them—the women like your London people in a negative sort of way—because the native men are the poorest creatures in England—because Government never have thought it worth while to send a recruiting party among them. When I think of Wordsworth's Sonnet, "Vanguard of Liberty! ye men of Kent!" the degenerated race about me are *Pulvis ipecac. simplex* [1]—a strong dose. Were I a corsair, I'd make a descent on the south coast of Devon; if I did not run the chance of

having cowardice imputed to me. I think it well for the honour of Britain that Julius Cæsar did not first land in this county. A Devonshirer standing on his native hills is not a distinct object—he does not show against the light—a wolf or two would dispossess him. I like, I love England—I like its living men—give me a long brown plain for my money, so I may meet with some of Edmond Ironside's descendants. Give me a barren mould, so I may meet with some shadowing of Alfred in the shape of a Gipsy, a huntsman, or a shepherd. Scenery is fine—but human nature is finer—the sward is richer for the tread of a real nervous English foot—the eagle's nest is finer, for the mountaineer has looked into it. Are these facts or prejudices? Whatever they be, for them I shall never be able to relish entirely any Devonshire scenery. Homer is fine,—Achilles is fine, Diomed is fine, Shakspeare is fine—Hamlet is fine, Lear is fine—but dwindled Englishmen are not fine. I wonder I meet with no born monsters. O Devonshire, last night I thought the moon had dwindled in heaven.

My brother Tom desires to be remembered to you.

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN KEATS

2. *John Keats to Fanny Keats*

DUMFRIES, July 2nd [1818]

MY DEAR FANNY,

I intended to have written to you from Kirkcudbright, the town I shall be in to-morrow—but I will

write now because my knapsack has worn my coat in the seams, my coat has gone to the tailor's and I have but one coat to my back in these parts. I must tell you how I went to Liverpool with George and our new Sister and the gentleman my fellow traveller through the summer and autumn. We had a tolerable journey to Liverpool—which I left the next morning before George was up for Lancaster. Then we set off from Lancaster on foot with our knapsacks on, and have walked a little zigzag through the mountains and lakes of Cumberland to this place. We are employed in going up mountains, looking at strange towns, prying into old ruins and eating very hearty breakfasts. Here we are full in the midst of broad Scotch "How is it a' wi'yourself"—the girls are walking about bare footed and in the worst cottages the smoke finds its way out of the door. I shall come home full of news for you and for fear I should choke you by too great a dose at once I must make you used to it by a letter or two.

We have been taken for travelling jewellers, razor sellers and spectacle vendors because friend Brown wears a pair. The first place we stopped at with our knapsacks contained one Richard Bradshaw, a notorious tippler. He stood in the shape of a § and balanced himself as well as he could, saying with his nose right in Mr. Brown's face, "Do—yo—u sell spect—ta—cles?" Mr. Abbey says we are Don Quixotes [1]—tell him we are more generally taken for Pedlars. All I hope is that we may not be taken for excisemen in this whiskey

country. We are generally up about 5 walking before breakfast and we complete our 20 miles before dinner. Yesterday we visited Burns's Tomb. I had done this far when my coat came back fortified at all points—so as we lose no time we set forth again through Galloway—all very pleasant and pretty with no fatigue when one is used to it. We are in the midst of Meg Merrilies' [1] country, of whom I suppose you have heard.

We have walked through a beautiful Country to Kirkcudbright—at which place I will write you a song about myself.

There was a naughty Boy,
A naughty Boy was he,
He would not stop at home,
He could not quiet be—
He took
In his Knapsack
A Book
Full of vowels
And a shirt
With some towels—
A slight cap
For night cap—
A hair brush,
Comb ditto,
New Stockings,
For old ones
Would split O!
This Knapsack
Tight at's back
He rivetted close
And followed his Nose

To the North,
To the North,
And followed his Nose
To the North.

There was a naughty Boy
And a naughty Boy was he,
For nothing would he do
But scribble poetry—
He took
An inkstand
In his hand
And a pen
Big as ten
In the other
And away
In a Pother
He ran
To the mountains
And fountains
And ghostes
And Postes
And witches
And ditches
And wrote
In his coat
When the weather was cool
Fear of gout,
And without
When the weather
Was warm—
Och the charm
When we choose
To follow one's Nose
To the North,
To the North,

To follow one's Nose
To the North!

There was a naughty Boy,
And a naughty Boy was he,
He ran away to Scotland
The people for to see—
Then he found
That the ground
Was as hard,
That a yard
Was as long,
That a song
Was as merry,
That a cherry
Was as red—
That lead
Was as weighty,
That fourscore
Was as eighty,
That a door
Was as wooden
As in England—
So he stood in his shoes
And he wondered,
He stood in his shoes
And he wondered.

My dear Fanny, I am ashamed of writing you such stuff, nor would I if it were not for being tired after my day's walking, and ready to tumble into bed so fatigued that when I am asleep you might sew my nose to my great toe and trundle me round the town, like a hoop, without waking me. Then I get so hungry a ham goes

but a very little way and fowls are like larks to me. A batch of bread I make no more ado with than a sheet of parliament; and I can eat a bull's head as easily as I used to do bull's eyes. I take a whole string of pork sausages down as easily as a pen'orth of lady's fingers. Ah, dear, I must soon be contented with an acre or two of oaten cake, a hogshead of milk and a cloaths basket of eggs morning, noon and night when I get among the Highlanders.

God bless you.

Your affectionate brother

JOHN

Do write me a Letter directed to *Inverness*, Scotland.

XXII

Thomas Hood (1799–1845), best known for his two poems "The Song of the Shirt" and "The Bridge of Sighs," became assistant sub-editor of the *London Magazine* in 1821, and was brought in contact with its brilliant staff of contributors, Lamb, DeQuincey, and Hazlitt. In 1834 Hood met with heavy pecuniary misfortunes, possibly because of the failure of his publisher. He received advances from his publishers and went abroad, hoping to retrieve his health and fortunes. To this period of residence on the continent most of his correspondence belongs. He writes with much gaiety and spirit for a patient worn with consumption. He combined the serious and comic with rare art.

Thomas Hood to May

17, Elm Tree Road, St. John's Wood,
Monday, April, 1844

My dear May,—

I promised you a letter, and here it is. I was sure to remember it; for you are as hard to forget, as you are soft to roll down a hill with. What fun it was! only so prickly, I thought I had a porcupine in one pocket, and a hedgehog in the other. The next time, before we kiss the earth, we will have its face well shaved. Did you ever go to Greenwich Fair? I should like to go there with you, for I get no rolling at St. John's Wood. Tom and Fanny only like roll and butter, and as for Mrs. Hood, she is for rolling in money.

Tell Dunnie that Tom has set his trap in the balcony

and has caught a cold, and tell Jeanie that Fannie has set her foot in the garden, but it has not come up yet. Oh, how I wish it was the season when "March winds and April showers bring forth *May* flowers!" for then of course you would give me another pretty little nosegay. Besides it is frosty and foggy weather, which I do not like. The other night, when I came from Stratford, the cold shriveled me up so, that when I got home, I thought I was my own child!

However, I hope we shall all have a merry Christmas; I mean to come in my most ticklesome waistcoat, and to laugh till I grow fat, or at least streaky. Fanny is to be allowed a glass of wine, Tom's mouth is to have a *hole* holiday, and Mrs. Hood is to sit up for supper! There will be doings! And then such good things to eat; but, pray, pray, pray, mind they don't boil the baby by a mistake for a *plump* pudding, instead of a plum one.

Give my love to everybody, from yourself down to Willy, with which and a kiss, I remain, up hill and down dale,

Your affectionate lover,
THOMAS HOOD

XXIII

JANE WELSH CARLYLE (1801–1866) is a unique figure in English literature, in that her title to a place rests almost wholly on her letters, which were never intended for publication. She was a high-strung, sensitive, frail woman, with a marvellous talent for expressing her feelings. Probably her hardships were no greater than those borne by many women,—such hardships as troublesome neighbors, callers who are bores, inefficient servants, housecleaning, exacting husbands with indigestion; yet she has described them so graphically in her letters that one feels that perhaps she was peculiarly afflicted. English literature is the richer for her misfortunes, and she is not wholly overshadowed by her husband.

1. *Jane Welsh Carlyle to Miss Stodart*

CRAIGENPUTTOCH,
21st November [Postmark, 1828]

MY DEAR ELIZA,—

Could you but see how it stands with me just at present, you would not be too much elated by this favour. For I am sitting here companionless, "like owl in desert," with nothing pressing to do, having learnt my daily task of Spanish, and also finished a shirt—let me speak truth, a nightshirt—I was making for my husband, and it is come into my head as a resource from ennui that I should write somebody a letter; and thus, dear, all you have to be proud of is, that my choice of an object has fallen on *you*. I tell you this out of my natural love of plain dealing.

You would know what I am doing in these moors?

Well, I am feeding poultry (at long intervals, and merely for form's sake), and I am galloping over the country on a bay horse, and baking bread, and improving my mind, and eating, and sleeping, and making, and mending, and, in short, wringing whatever good I can from the ungrateful soil of the world. On the whole, I was never more contented in my life; one enjoys such freedom and quietude here. Nor have we purchased this at the expense of other accommodations; for we have a good house to live in, with all the necessaries of life, and even some touch of the superfluities. "Do you *attempt* to raise any corn?" the people ask us. Bless their hearts! we are planning strawberry-banks, and shrubberies, and beds of roses, with the most perfect assurance that they will grow. As to the corn, it grows to all lengths, without ever consulting the public about the matter. Another question that is asked me, so often as I am abroad, is, how many cows I keep; which question, to my eternal shame as a housewife, I have never yet been enabled to answer, having never ascertained, up to this moment, whether there are seven cows or eleven. The fact is, I take no delight in cows, and have happily no concern with them. Carlyle and I are not playing farmers here, which were a rash and unnatural attempt. My brother-in-law is the farmer, and fights his own battle, in his own new house, which one of his sisters manages for him.

In the autumn I had enough to mind without counting cows, the house being often full of visitors. There was Robert (my uncle) and Ann, a Mr. Graham of

Burnswark, Jeffrey, with wife and child and maid and lap-dog, George and *his* wife, *our dear* Henry Inglis, and several others whom you do not know. And how on earth did Mr. Jeffrey get himself amused at Craigenputtoch? Why, in the simplest manner. He talked—talked from morning till night, nay, till morning again. I never assisted at such a talking since I came into the world, either in respect of quantity or quality.

Mrs. Richardson is getting out a new edition of that weary book, and fitting out her daughter Willie for India; neither ware, I am afraid, will find a ready market.

John Carlyle [1] is still in Germany. We looked for him home, but he has found that he could neither have peace in his lifetime, nor sleep quiet in his grave, had he missed studying six months in Vienna. Little Jane is gone back to Scotsbrig, where she could not be well spared, another sister being here with Alick. So that Carlyle and I are quite by ourselves at present, moralizing together, and learning Spanish together, and in short, living in the most confidential manner imaginable. You never saw so still a house; we have just one servant (Grace Macdonald), and not even a cat in addition (for we find mouse-traps answer much better). By the way, this Grace is just the cleverest servant I ever had occasion to know, and would be a perfect paragon in her line were it not for certain "second table" airs about her, which without doubt she must have picked up at the Manners's.

My Mother dined here ten days ago, and stayed a night, her *second* and *longest* visit since we came. But

she is of necessity much confined at home now, and also imagines the necessity to be greater than it is. You inquire if I will be in Edinburgh this winter. I think the chances are about two to one that I shall. We are pressingly invited to spend some time with the Jeffreys; and Carlyle has agreed to go, provided he gets three papers, promised to the *Foreign Review*, finished by then. Should he be belated with these, he would have me go without him; but that I shall not dream of doing. It would be poor entertainment for one in Edinburgh or anywhere else to think one's husband was here in the desert *alone*, his stockings getting all into holes, and perhaps even his tea running down.

Remember me in the kindest manner to your Uncle, and say to him that, if he will come and see us in the summer, the fatted calf shall be slain to make him welcome, to say nothing of lambs and poultry.

Carlyle is away in Annandale at present. His eldest sister has been ill for some time, and he is gone to see what can be done for her. I am afraid she is in a very bad way. Do write.

Ever affectionately yours,
J. W. CARLYLE

2. *Jane Welsh Carlyle to Miss Stodart*

CRAIGENPUTTOCH
5th February [Postmark, 1830]

DEAREST ELIZA,—

This has been the unluckiest new year to me! Every day some Job's-post or other tempts me to curse my

stars. It began with the death of my pig—my sweet, wise, little pig, who was the apple of my eye; he got a surfeit one evening, and next morning I was pigless! and just when my long-cherished hopes of him were approaching their fulfilment, and a few more weeks would have plumped him out into such delicate bacon! So the glory of this world passeth away! On the back of this severe family-affliction followed a disaster occasioned by a quite different cause, being the consequence, not of overfeeding, but pure starvation: a stranger cat under the pangs of famine rushed wildly into our larder one day, making straight in the direction of a beefsteak; and, before you could bless yourself, snack went the steak, and smash went a *corner-dish*, which you know was as bad as if the whole four corner-dishes had been broken, or at least a pair of them. And, alas! this was only a beginning. This smash, it seemed, was but a signal for the breakage of all the crockery, glass, and china about the house. For now Nancy became as it were suddenly possessed with a demon of destruction which shivered everything she laid hands on; nay, the supper-tray, with all its complement of bowls, plates, etc., etc., she "soopit ower wi' her tails!"[1] One fell soop! But already I must have filled your eyes with tears, and will not tax your sympathy with a detail of *all* my grievances; indeed, one sheet would not hold them.

And now, contrary to my usual practice, "I must plant a remark" or two on the weather. It is well we have meat and fire "within ourselves" (as Mrs. Rough-

head used to say), otherwise we should live in hourly apprehension of being snowed up, and consequently starved to death without even the mournful alternative of "eating our own children." Oh for a sight of the green fields again, or even the black peatmoss—anything rather than this wide waste of blinding snow! The only time when I can endure to look out (going out is not to be dreamt of) is by moonlight, when the enclosure before the house is literally filled with hares, and then the scene is really very picturesque, the little dark forms skipping and bounding over the white ground so witch-like! A still more novel spectacle exhibited itself the other day at broad noon. Seven blackcocks, "as *fine* (or perhaps finer) as ever stepped the streets of Greenock," came running down the wood to within a few yards of the door. Such are the pleasing varieties of life here. You will allow that they are extremely innocent.

Carlyle inquired if I had sent his love the last time, and charges me to remember it now. We speak of your Uncle and you over our evening fire both often and kindly. My kindest regards are with you both. My Grandfather continues much the same. God bless you!

Always affectionately yours
JANE W. CARLYLE

A good new year, and many of them.—T. C.

3. *Jane Welsh Carlyle to Mrs. Welsh*

DEAREST MOTHER,—

Your last letter is particularly unsatisfactory, scattery "to a degree!" as indeed all your Letters from Liverpool have been; but now that you have a "bit haddin' o' your ain" [1] again, I really do pray you to be at leisure, for "depend upon it the slower thou gangs the sooner thou'lt get to thy journey's end." I should have liked to know your mode of travelling; and whether my Uncle was "not so well" in the eyes or in his general health; and a variety of other things which are left to "my own *conjectur*." This is the fourth Letter you will please to remember (including the long one to my uncle) which I have written in Lecture-time, a time of hurry and flurry enough to drive a nervous human being like myself into daily hysterics,—if it were not that my will is stronger than my nerves. All this seems to me to deserve an ample and leisurely *return*.

To-morrow is last Lecture-day, thank Heaven. Unless he can get *hardened* in this trade, he certainly ought to discontinue it; for no gain or eclat that it can yield, is compensation enough for the martyrdom it is to himself, and thro' him to me,—to appearance he has got thro' the thing this year much more smoothly and quite as brilliantly as last year; but in defect of the usual measure of agitation *beforehand*, he has taken to the new and curious crotchet of being ready to hang himself *after*, in the idea that he has made "a horrible

pluister [mess] of it." No demonstrations of the highest satisfaction on the part of his audience can convince him to the contrary; and he remains, under applause that would turn the head of most Lecturers, haunted by the pale ghost of last day's Lecture "shaking its gory locks at him" till next day's arrives to take its place and torment him in its turn.—"Very absurd."

We are suffering sadly from cold; by and by it will be hot enough. And then what is to follow is not yet very clearly apparent. Sometimes Carlyle talks of going to make a lecturing campaign in America this very Autumn; sometimes of taking a house on the seashore; but we are likely, I think, to end in a campaign against Templand,[1] which I should not wonder if in your opinion were the most judicious and natural-looking thing we could do.—God bless you, my own dear Mother: but you must get yourself right paper, ink and pens, and write world-looking Letters.

Your affectionate

JANE

XXIV

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804–1864) was a man of the finest sensibilities, of which the following letters give ample proof. Unfortunately, like many men of letters, he had financial difficulties, especially after losing his position in the custom house at Salem. The money loaned by his friends was repaid within three years, and the letter accompanying it is evidence of his nobility of spirit. Fortunately he did not have to resort to the "drudgery of literature" for support. He stands foremost in American literature as a novelist, and succeeded in imparting to his writings the finest qualities of New England life and character.

1. *Nathaniel Hawthorne to George Stillman Hillard*

CONCORD, March 24, 1844

I thank you for your kind and warm congratulations on the advent of our little Una—a name which I wish you were entirely pleased with; as I think you will be bye and bye. Perhaps the first impression may not be altogether agreeable; for the name has never before been warmed with human life, and therefore may not seem appropriate to real flesh and blood. But for us, our child has already given it a natural warmth; and when she has worn it through her lifetime, and perhaps transmitted it to descendants of her own, the beautiful name will have become naturalized on earth;—whereby we shall have done a good deed in bringing it out of the realm of Faery. I do not agree with you that poetry ought not to be brought into common life. If flowers of

Eden can be made to grow among my cabbages and squashes, it will please me so much the better; those excellent vegetables will be just as good to eat, and the flowers no less delightful to see and smell. After all, I like the name, not so much from any association with Spencer's heroine,[1] as for its simple self—it is as simple as a name can be—as simple as a breath—it is merely inhaling a breath into one's heart, and emitting it again, and the name is spoken.

As for myself, who have been a trifler preposterously long, I find it necessary to come out of my cloud-region, and allow myself to be woven into the sombre texture of humanity. There is no escaping it any longer. I have business on earth now, and must look about me for the means of doing it.

It will never do for me to continue merely a writer of stories for the magazines—the most unprofitable business in the world; and moreover, even if there were ever so great a demand for my productions, I could not spend more than a third of my time in this sort of composition. It requires a continual freshness of mind; else a deterioration in the article will quickly be perceptible. If I am to support myself by literature, it must be by what is called drudgery, but which is incomparably less irksome, as a business, than imaginative writing—by translation, concocting of school-books, newspaper scribbling, &c. If we have a democratic administration next year, I shall again favour Uncle Sam with my services, though, I hope, in some less disagreeable shape than formerly.[2]

I sent an article to Graham some months ago, and he wrote to me, accepting it with a "great deal of pleasure," &c.—but it does not yet appear. Unless he publishes it next month, I shall reclaim it—having occasion for it elsewhere. God keep me from ever being really a writer for bread! If I alone was concerned, I had rather starve; but in that case poor little Una would have to take refuge in the alms-house—which, here in Concord, is a most gloomy old mansion. Her "angel face" would hardly make a sunshine there. You must come and see little Una and the rest of us, as soon as the railroad is opened. People of experience in babies say she is going to be very pretty—which I devoutly believe, though the tokens are as yet hidden from my eyes. At all events, she is a remarkably strong and healthy child, free from all troubles and torments such as Nature generally provides for poor little babies. She seldom cries except for hunger—her alimentiveness being enormously developed. She has already smiled once, on the sixteenth morning of her existence. I hope to see you in Boston, early in next month. Give our regards to Mrs. Hillard. We long to show her our baby. It is a pity that any mortal should go out of life, without experiencing what gives life its reality; and, next to a child on earth, it is good to have a child in Heaven.

Your friend,

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

2. *Nathaniel Hawthorne to George Stillman Hillard*

SALEM, Jan. 20, 1850

I read your letter in the vestibule of the Post Office; and it drew—what my troubles never have—the water to my eyes; so that I was glad of the sharply cold west wind that blew into them as I came homeward, and gave them an excuse for being red and bleared.

There was much that was very sweet—and something too that was very bitter—mingled with that same moisture. It is sweet to be remembered and cared for by one's friends—some of whom know me for what I am, while others, perhaps, know me only through a generous faith—sweet to think that they deem me worth upholding in my poor work through life. And it is bitter, nevertheless, to need their support. It is something else besides pride that teaches me that ill-success in life is really and justly a matter of shame. I am ashamed of it, and I ought to be. The fault of a failure is attributable—in a great degree at least—to the man who fails. I should apply this truth in judging of other men; and it behooves me not to shun its point or edge in taking it home to my *own* heart. Nobody has a right to live in the world, unless he be strong and able, and applies his ability to good purpose.

The money, dear Hillard, will smooth my path for a long time to come. The only way in which a man can retain his self-respect, while availing himself of the

generosity of his friends, is by making it an incitement to his utmost exertions, so that he may not need their help again. I shall look upon it so—nor will shun any drudgery that my hand shall find to do, if thereby I may win bread.

XXV

ROBERT EDWARD LEE (1807–1870) was distinguished for his services in the Mexican and Civil wars. In 1865 he was offered the presidency of Washington College, Lexington, Virginia, (now Washington and Lee College) an office he held until his death. In the midst of arduous duties as soldier and college president, he found time to write friendly, sympathetic letters to his family and friends. His letters from Mexico to his children are especially worthy of interest. He wrote his son, who had acquired a plantation of his own, letters full of advice and instruction that anticipated the present scientific methods of farming. He refused to lend his name to an insurance company, when he felt that he could not make adequate returns for the salary offered.

1. *Robert E. Lee to the Trustees of Washington College*

POWHATAN COUNTY, August 24, 1865

GENTLEMEN:

I have delayed for some days replying to your letter of the 5th inst., informing me of my election by the board of trustees to the presidency of Washington College, from a desire to give the subject due consideration. Fully impressed with the responsibilities of the office, I have feared that I should be unable to discharge its duties to the satisfaction of the trustees or to the benefit of the country. The proper education of youth requires not only great ability, but I fear more strength than I now possess, for I do not feel able to undergo the labour of conducting classes in regular

courses of instruction. I could not, therefore, undertake more than the general administration and supervision of the institution. There is another subject which has caused me serious reflection, and is, I think, worthy of the consideration of the board. Being excluded from the terms of amnesty in the proclamation of the President of the United States, of the 29th of May last, and an object of censure to a portion of the country, I have thought it probable that my occupation of the position of president might draw upon the college a feeling of hostility; and I should, therefore, cause injury to an institution which it would be my highest desire to advance. I think it the duty of every citizen, in the present condition of the country, to do all in his power to aid in the restoration of peace and harmony, and in no way to oppose the policy of the State or general government directed to that object. It is particularly incumbent on those charged with the instruction of the young to set them an example of submission to authority, and I could not consent to be the cause of animadversion upon the college. Should you, however, take a different view, and think that my services in the position tendered to me by the board will be advantageous to the college and country, I will yield to your judgment and accept it; otherwise, I must most respectfully decline the office. Begging you to express to the trustees of the college my heartfelt gratitude for the honour conferred upon me, and requesting you to accept my cordial thanks for the kind manner in which you have communicated their decision, I am,

gentlemen, with great respect, your most obedient servant,

R. E. Lee

2. *Robert E. Lee to Peabody Russell* *

Lexington, Va., November 10, 1869

My dear Mr. Russell:

The announcement of the death of your uncle, Mr. George Peabody, has been received with the deepest regret wherever his name and benevolence are known; and nowhere have his generous deeds, restricted to no country, section, or sect, elicited more heart-felt admiration than at the South.

He stands alone in history for the benevolent use and judicious distribution of his great wealth, and his memory has become justly entwined in the affections of millions of his fellow-citizens in both hemispheres.

I beg in my own behalf, and in behalf of the trustees and faculty of Washington College, Virginia, which has not been forgotten by him in his acts of generosity, to tender our unfeigned sorrow at his death.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

R. E. Lee

* Reprinted from *Personal Reminiscences, Anecdotes, and Letters of Gen. Robert E. Lee* by permission of D. Appleton and Company.

3. *Robert E. Lee to General J. B. Gordon*

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA, December 14, 1869

GENERAL J. B. GORDON, President,
SOUTHERN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY,
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

MY DEAR GENERAL:

I have received your letter of the 3d inst., and am duly sensible of the kind feelings which prompted your proposal. It would be a great pleasure to me to be associated with you, Hampton,[1] B. H. Hill, and the other good men whose names I see on your list of directors, but I feel that I ought not to abandon the position I hold at Washington College at this time, or as long as I can be of service to it. Thanking you for your kind consideration, for which I know I am alone indebted for your proposition to become president of the Southern Life Insurance Company, and with kindest regards to Mrs. Gordon and my best wishes for yourself, I am,

Very truly yours,
R. E. LEE

XXVI

Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) was the sixteenth President of the United States. His early life was one of toil, hardship, and privation, yet his thrift and ambition and capacity for work enabled him to rise steadily to positions of greater and greater honor and confidence. John D. Johnston, to whom the following letter is written, was the son of Lincoln's step-mother, Mrs. Sarah Bush Johnston. He was a man devoid of all the qualities that insured the success of Lincoln's life. The following letter is characteristic of Lincoln, in its candor, kindliness, and shrewd common sense.

Abraham Lincoln to John D. Johnston

January 2, 1851

Dear Johnston:

Your request for eighty dollars I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little you have said to me, "We can get along very well now"; but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now, this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not lazy, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; it is vastly impor-

tant to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them, because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

You are now in need of some money; and what I propose is, that you shall go to work, "tooth and nail," for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of your things at home, prepare for a crop, and make a crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get; and, to secure you a fair reward for your labour, I now promise you, that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of May, get for your own labour, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean that you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County.

Now, if you will do this, you will be soon out of debt, and, what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But, if I should now clear you out of debt, next year you would be just as deep in as ever. You say you would almost give your place in heaven for seventy or eighty dollars. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap, for

I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work. You say if I will furnish you the money you will deed me the land, and if you don't pay the money back you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't live now with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been very kind to me, and I do not mean to be unkind to you. On the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eighty times eighty dollars to you.

Affectionately your brother,

A. LINCOLN

XXVII

Edward Fitzgerald (1809–1883), known chiefly as the translator of *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam, lived a quiet, serene life in Suffolk. Flowers, music, literature, his yacht, and his friends were the chief objects of his thought and interest. He married Lucy, the daughter of Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet. When Mr. W. Aldis Wright, his friend and literary executor, published his letters, it was discovered that this unobtrusive author was one of the greatest letter-writers. He put "fine feeling in fine English." Witty, sympathetic, kindly, whimsical, he lived in the country, removed from the stir of the world, but bound his friends to him with "hoops of steel." Chief among them were Frederic Tennyson, the brother of Alfred, and Thackeray. Some quotations from his letters reveal his true spirit. "The dirt, both of earth and atmosphere, in London, is a real bore." "I am an idle fellow, of a very ladylike turn of sentiment; and my friendships are more like loves, I think." "I really do like to sit in this doleful place [Boulge] with a good fire, a cat and dog on the rug, and an old woman in the kitchen. This is all my live stock." Letters of his in this happy vein fill two large volumes.

1. *Edward Fitzgerald to Bernard Barton*

19 Charlotte St.
April 11/44

Dear Barton:

I am still indignant at this nasty place London. Thackeray, whom I came up to see, went off to Brighton the night after I arrived, and has not re-appeared; but I must wait some time longer for him. Oh *rus, quando*

te aspiciam? [1] Construe that, Mr. Barton. I am going to send down my pictures to Boulge, if I can secure them: they are not quite secure at present. If they vanish, I snap my fingers at them, Magi and all—there is a world (alas!) elsewhere beyond pictures—Oh, oh, oh, oh—

I smoked a pipe with Carlyle yesterday. We ascended from his dining room carrying pipes and tobacco up through two stories of his house, and got into a little dressing room near the roof: there we sat down: the window was open and looked out on nursery gardens, their almond trees in blossom, and beyond, bare walls of houses, and over these, roofs and chimneys, and here and there a steeple, and whole London crowned with darkness gathering behind like the illimitable resources of a dream. I tried to persuade him to leave the accursed den, and he wished,—but—but—perhaps he *didn't* wish on the whole.

When I get back to Boulge I shall recover my quietude which is now all in a ripple. But it is a shame to talk of such things.

A cloud comes over Charlotte Street and seems as if it were sailing softly on the April wind to fall in a blessed shower upon the lilac buds and thirsty anemones somewhere in Essex; or, who knows? perhaps at Boulge. Out will run Mrs. Faiers, and with red arms and face of woe haul in the struggling windows of the cottage, and make all tight. Beauty Bob will cast a bird's eye out at the shower, and bless the useful wet. Mr. Loder will observe to the farmer for whom he is doing

up a dozen of Queen's Heads, that it will be of great use: and the farmer will agree that his young barleys wanted it much. The German Ocean will dimple with innumerable pin points, and porpoises rolling near the surface sneeze with unusual pellets of fresh water—

> Can such things be,
> And overcome us like a summer cloud,
> Without our special wonder?

Oh this wonderful world.

Farewell.

2. *Edward Fitzgerald to Frederic Tennyson*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE, Oct. 10/44

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

You will think I have wholly cut you. But I wrote half a letter to you three months ago; and mislaid it; spent some time in looking for it, always hoping; and then some more time despairing; and we all know how time goes when we have got a thing to do which we are rather lazy about doing. As for instance, getting up in the morning. Not that writing a letter to you is so bad as getting up, but it is not easy for mortal man who has heard, seen, done, and thought, nothing since he last wrote, to fill one of these big foreign sheets full as a foreign letter ought to be. I am now returned to my dull home here after my usual pottering about in the midland counties of England. A little Bedfordshire—a little Northamptonshire—a little more fold-

ing of the hands—the same faces—the same fields—the same thoughts occurring at the same turns of road—this is all I have to tell you of; nothing at all added—but the summer gone. My garden is covered with yellow and brown leaves; and a man is digging up the garden beds before my window, and will plant some roots and bulbs for next year. My parsons come and smoke with me, etc. "The round of life from hour to hour"—alluding doubtless to a mill-horse. Alfred is reported to be still at Park House, where he has been sojourning for two months, I think; but he never writes me a word. Hydropathy has done its worst; he writes the names of his friends in water.

I spent two days in London with old Morton about five weeks ago; and pleasant days they were. The rogue bewitches me with his wit and honest speech. He also staid some while at Park House, while Alfred was there, and managed of course to frighten the party occasionally with some of his sallies. He often writes to me; and very good his letters are, all of them.

When do you mean to write me another? Morton told me in his last that he had heard from Brotherton you were gone, or going to Naples. I dare say this sheet of mine will never get to your hands. But if it does, let me hear from you. Is Italy becoming stale to you? Are you going to Cairo for fresh sensations? Thackeray went off in a steamboat about the time the French were before Mogadore;[1] he was to see those coasts and to visit Jerusalem! Titmarsh[2] at Jerusalem will certainly be an era in Christianity. But I suppose

he will soon be back now. Spedding [1] is yet in his highlands, I believe, considering Grouse and Bacon.

I expect to run up to London some time during the winter just to tell over old friends' faces and get a sup of music and painting. I have bought very few more pictures lately; and heard no music but Mendelssohn's M. Night's Dream. The overture, which was published long ago, is the best part; but there is a very noble triumphal march also.

Now I feel just in the same fix as I did in that sheet of paper whose fate is uncertain. But if I don't put in a word more, yet this shall go, I am determined. Only consider how it is a matter of necessity that I should have nothing to say. If you could see this place of Boulge! You who sit and survey marble palaces rising out of cypress and olive. There is a dreadful vulgar ballad, composed by Mr. Balfe, and sung with the most unbounded applause by Miss Rainforth,

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls,

which is sung and organed at every corner in London. I think you may imagine what kind of flowing $^{6}/_{8}$ time of the last degree of imbecility it is. The words are written by Mr. Bunn. *Arcades ambo.*[2]

I say we shall see you over in England before long: for I rather think you want an Englishman to quarrel with sometimes. I mean quarrel in the sense of a good strenuous difference of opinion, supported on either side by occasional outbursts of spleen. Come and let us try. You used to irritate my vegetable blood sometimes.

XXVIII

When William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863) was in the United States in 1852, he became acquainted with the Baxter family of New York. The acquaintance ripened into a cordial friendship that lasted until his death. The letters to this family have been collected in a volume entitled *Thackeray's Letters to an American Family*, from which the following selections are made. Thackeray was sincere, unaffected, and simple in his tastes, hating sham and pretence of all kinds. His letters to Dr. and Mrs. Brookfield reveal those qualities that endeared him, the man of the world, to that delightful recluse, Edward Fitzgerald.

William Makepeace Thackeray to Lucy D. Baxter

Washington,
Saturday, Feb. 19, 1853

My dear little kind Lucy,

I began to write you a letter in the railroad yesterday, but it bumped with more than ordinary violence, and I was forced to give up the endeavour. I did not know how ill Lucy was at that time, only remembered that I owed her a letter for that pretty one you wrote me at Philadelphia, when Sarah was sick and you acted as her Secretary. Is there going to be always Somebody sick at the brown house? If I were to come there now, I wonder should I be allowed to come and see you in your night-cap—I wonder even do you wear a night-cap? I should step up, take your little hand, which I daresay is lying outside the coverlet, give it a little

shake; and then sit down and talk all sorts of stuff and nonsense to you for half an hour; but very kind and gentle, not so as to make you laugh too much or your little back ache any more. Did I not tell you to leave off that beecely jimnayshum? I am always giving fine advice to girls in brown houses, and they always keep on never minding. It is not difficult to write lying in bed—this is written not in bed, but on a sofa. If you write the upright hand it's quite easy; slantingdicular is not so pleasant, though. I have just come back from Baltimore and find your mother's and sister's melancholy letters. I thought to myself, perhaps I might see them on this very sofa and pictured to myself their 2 kind faces. Mr. Crampton was going to ask them to dinner, I had made arrangements to get Sarah nice partners at the ball—Why did dear little Lucy tumble down at the Gymnasium? Many a pretty plan in life tumbles down so, Miss Lucy, and falls on its back. But the good of being ill is to find how kind one's friends are; of being at a pinch (I do not know whether I may use the expression—whether "pinch" is an indelicate word in this country; it is used by our old writers to signify poverty, narrow circumstances, *res angusta*)—the good of being poor, I say, is to find friends to help you. I have been both ill and poor, and found, thank God! such consolation in those evils; and I daresay at this moment, now you are laid up, you are the person of the most importance in the whole house—Sarah is sliding about the room with cordials in her hands and eyes; Libby is sitting quite disconsolate by the bed

(poor Libby! when one little bird fell off the perch, I wonder the other did not go up and fall off, too!); the expression of sympathy in Ben's eyes is perfectly heart-rending; even George is quiet; and your Father, Mother, and Uncle (all 3 so notorious for their violence of temper and language) have actually forgotten to scold. "*Ach, du lieber Himmel,*" says Herr Strumpf—isn't his name Herr Strumpf?—the German master, "*die schone Fräulein ist krank!*" [1] and bursts into tears on the Pianofortyfer's shoulder when he hears the news (through his sobs) from black John.

But even if Miss Lucy had not had her fall, I daresay there would have been no party. Here is a great snow-storm falling, though yesterday was as bland and bright as May (English May, I mean) and how could we have lionized Baltimore, and gone to Mount Vernon, and taken our diversion in the snow? There would have been nothing for it but to stay in this little closet of a room, where there is scarce room for 6 people, and where it is not near so comfortable as the brown house. Dear old b. h., shall I see it again soon? I shall not go farther than Charleston, and Savannah probably, and then I hope I shall get another look at you all again before I commence farther wanderings—O, stop! I didn't tell you why I was going to write you—well, I went on Thursday to dine with Governor and Mrs. Fish, a dinner in honour of me—and before I went I arrayed myself in a certain white garment of which the collar-button-holes had been altered, and I thought of the kind, friendly little hand that had done that deed for

me; and when the Fisheses told me how they lived in the Second Avenue (I had forgotten all about 'em)—their house and the house opposite came back to my mind, and I liked them 50 times better for living near some friends of mine. She is a nice woman, Madam Fish, besides; and didn't I abuse you all to her?

Good bye, dear little Lucy—I wish the paper wasn't full. But I have been sitting half an hour by the poor young lady's sofa, and talking stuff and nonsense, haven't I? And now I get up, and shake your hand with a God bless you! and walk down stairs, and please to give everybody my kindest regards, and remember that I am truly your friend,

W. M. T.

XXIX

No man had a larger circle of warm, personal friends than did Charles Dickens (1812–1867), if one judges from the extent, variety, and nature of his correspondence. He always contrived to find time to write letters to his family and friends, even when occupied with the most exacting work. When exhausted by the strain of lectures and readings, Dickens wrote some of his most unique and readable letters. To his family, his sister-in-law, Miss Georgina Hogarth, and to Douglas Jerrold of the staff of *Punch*, to Macready, the actor, to Stanfield, the artist, to Landor, Wilkie Collins, and a score of others, he wrote generously and spontaneously out of an unselfish heart. His letters, in the later years of his life, are full of the pleasure that his house at Gad's Hill afforded him,—"Gad's Hill, near Rochester, in Kent—Shakespeare's Gad's Hill, where Falstaff engaged in the robbery," as Dickens wrote to one of his friends.

1. *Charles Dickens to Master Hastings Hughes*

DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON,
Twelfth December, 1838

RESPECTED SIR,—

I have given Squeers [1] one cut on the neck and two on the head, at which he appeared much surprised and began to cry which, being a cowardly thing, is just what I should have expected from him—wouldn't you?

I have carefully done what you told me in your letter about the lamb and two "sheeps" for the little boys. They have also had some good ale and porter, and some wine. I am sorry you didn't say what wine you would

like them to have. I gave them some sherry which they liked very much, except one boy, who was a little sick and choked a good deal. He was rather greedy, and that's the truth, and I believe it went the wrong way, which I say served him right, and I hope you will say so too.

Nicholas had his roast lamb, as you said he was to, but he could not eat it all, and says if you do not mind his doing so he should like to have the rest hashed to-morrow with some greens, which he is very fond of, and so am I. He said he did not like to have his porter hot, for he thought it spoilt the flavour, so I let him have it cold. You should have seen him drink it. I thought he never would have left off. I also gave him three pounds of money, all in six-pences, to make it seem more, and he said directly that he should give more than half to his mamma and sister, and divide the rest with poor Smike. And I say he is a good fellow for saying so; and if anybody says he isn't I am ready to fight him whenever they like—there.

Fanny Squeers shall be attended to, depend upon it. Your drawing of her is very like, except that I don't think the hair is quite curly enough. The nose is particularly like her, and so are the legs. She is a nasty disagreeable thing, and I know it will make her very cross when she sees it; and what I say is that I hope it may. You will say the same I know—at least I think you will.

I meant to have written you a long letter, but I cannot write very fast when I like the person I am writing

to, because that makes me think about them, and I like you, and so I tell you. Besides, it is just eight o'clock, at night, and I always go to bed at eight o'clock, except when it is my birthday, and then I sit up to supper. So I will not say anything more besides this—and that is my love to you and Neptune; and if you will drink my health every Christmas Day I will drink yours—come.—I am, Respected Sir,

Your affectionate Friend

P. S.—I don't write my name very plain, but you know what it is you know, so never mind.

2. *Charles Dickens to Henry Austin*

NIAGARA FALLS (ENGLISH SIDE),
Sunday, First May, 1842

MY DEAR HENRY,—

We have had a blessed interval of quiet in this beautiful place, of which, as you may suppose, we stood greatly in need, not only by reason of our hard travelling for a long time, but on account of the incessant persecutions of the people, by land and water, on stage-coach, railway car, and steamer, which exceeds anything you can picture to yourself by the utmost stretch of your imagination. So far we have had this hotel nearly to ourselves. It is a large square house, standing on a bold height, with overhanging eaves like a Swiss cottage, and a wide handsome gallery outside every story. These colonnades make it look so very light,

that it has exactly the appearance of a house built with a pack of cards; and I live in bodily terror lest any man should venture to step out of a little observatory on the roof, and crush the whole structure with one stamp of his foot.

Our sitting-room (which is large and low like a nursery) is on the second floor, and is so close to the Falls that the windows are always wet and dim with spray. Two bedrooms open out of it—one our own; one Anne's. The secretary slumbers near at hand, but without these sacred precincts. From the three chambers, or any part of them, you can see the Falls rolling and tumbling, and roaring and leaping, all day long, with bright rainbows making fiery arches down a hundred feet below us. When the sun is on them, they shine and glow like molten gold. When the day is gloomy, the water falls like snow, or sometimes it seems to crumble away like the face of a great chalk cliff, or sometimes again to fall along the front of the rock like white smoke. But it all seems gay or gloomy, dark or light, by sun or moon. From the bottom of both Falls, there is always rising up a solemn ghostly cloud, which hides the boiling cauldron from human sight, and makes it in its mystery a hundred times more grand than if you could see all the secrets that lie hidden in its tremendous depth. One Fall is as close to us as York Gate is to No. 1 Devonshire Terrace. The other (the great Horse-Shoe Fall) may be, perhaps, about half as far off as 'Creedy's.[1] One circumstance in connection with them is, in all the accounts, greatly

exaggerated—I mean the noise. Last night was perfectly still. Kate and I could just hear them, at the quiet time of sunset, a mile off. Whereas, believing the statements I had heard I began putting my ear to the ground, like a savage or a bandit in a ballet, thirty miles off, when we were coming here from Buffalo.

I was delighted to receive your famous letter, and to read your account of our darlings, whom we long to see with an intensity it is impossible to shadow forth, ever so faintly. I do believe, though I say it as shouldn't, that they are good 'uns—both to look at and to go. I roared out this morning, as soon as I was awake, "Next month," which we have been longing to be able to say ever since we have been here. I really do not know how we shall ever knock at the door, when that slowest of all impossibly slow hackney-coaches shall pull up—at home.

The places we have lodged in, the roads we have gone over, the company we have been among, the tobacco-spittle we have wallowed in, the strange customs we have complied with, the packing-cases in which we have travelled, the woods, swamps, prairies, lakes, and mountains we have crossed, are all subjects for legends and tales at home; quires, reams, wouldn't hold them. I don't think Anne has so much as seen an American tree. She never looks at a prospect by any chance, or displays the smallest emotion at any sight whatever. She objects to Niagara that "it's nothing but water," and considers that "there is too much of that."

We purpose leaving this on Wednesday morning.

Give my love to Letitia and to mother, and always believe me, my dear Henry,

Affectionately yours,
CHARLES DICKENS

3. *Charles Dickens to Mrs. Dickens*

OUT OF THE COMMON–PLEASE

Dickens against the World

Charles Dickens, of No. 1 Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park, in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, the successful plaintiff in the above cause, maketh oath and saith: That on the day and date hereof, to wit at seven o'clock in the evening, he, this deponent, took the chair at a large assembly of the Mechanics' Institution at Liverpool, and that having been received with tremendous and enthusiastic plaudits, he, this deponent, did immediately dash into a vigorous, brilliant, humorous, pathetic, eloquent, fervid, and impassioned speech. That the said speech was enlivened by thirteen hundred persons, with frequent, vehement, uproarious, and deafening cheers, and to the best of this deponent's knowledge and belief, he, this deponent, did speak up like a man, and did, to the best of his knowledge and belief, considerably distinguish himself. That after the proceedings of the opening were over, and a vote of thanks was proposed to this deponent, he, this deponent, did again distinguish himself, and that the cheering at that time,

accompanied with clapping of hands and stamping of feet, was in this deponent's case thundering and awful. And this deponent further saith, that his white-and-black or magpie waistcoat, did create a strong sensation, and that during the hours of promenading, this deponent heard from persons surrounding him such exclamations as "What is it? Is it a waistcoat? No, it's a shirt"—and the like—all of which this deponent believes to have been complimentary and gratifying; but this deponent further saith that he is now going to supper, and wishes he may have an appetite to eat it.

CHARLES DICKENS

Sworn before me, at the Adelphi
Hotel, Liverpool, on the Twenty-
sixth of February, 1844
S. RADLEY

4. *Charles Dickens to Washington Irving*

[1842]

MY DEAR SIR,—

There is no man in the world who could have given me the heartfelt pleasure you have, by your kind note of the thirteenth of last month. There is no living writer, and there are very few among the dead, whose approbation I should feel so proud to earn. And with everything you have written upon my shelves, and in my thoughts, and in my heart of hearts, I may honestly and truly say so. If you could know how earnestly I write this, you would be glad to read it—as I hope you

will be, faintly guessing at the warmth of the hand I hold out to you over the broad Atlantic.

I wish I could find in your welcome letter some hint of an intention to visit England. I can't. I have held it at arm's length, and taken a bird's-eye view of it, after reading it a great many times, but there is no greater encouragement in it this way than on a microscopic inspection. I should love to go with you—as I have gone, God knows how often—into Little Britain, and Eastcheap, and Green Arbour Court, and Westminster Abbey. I should like to travel with you, outside the last of the coaches down to Bracebridge Hall.[1] It would make my heart glad to compare notes with you about that shabby gentleman in the oilcloth hat and red nose, who sat in the nine-cornered back-parlour of the Masons' Arms; and about Robert Preston and the tallow-chandler's widow, whose sitting-room is second nature to me; and about all those delightful places and people that I used to walk about and dream of in the daytime, when a very small and not over-particularly-taken-care-of boy. I have a good deal to say, too, about that dashing Alonzo de Ojeda, that you can't help being fonder of than you ought to be; and much to hear concerning Moorish legend, and poor unhappy Boabdil.[2] Diedrich Knickerbocker[3] I have worn to death in my pocket, and yet I should show you his mutilated carcass with a joy past all expression.

I have been so accustomed to associate you with my pleasantest and happiest thoughts, and with my leisure hours, that I rush at once into full confidence with you,

and fall, as it were naturally and by the very laws of gravity, into your open arms. Questions come thronging to my pen as to the lips of people who meet after long hoping to do so. I don't know what to say first or what to leave unsaid, and am constantly disposed to break off and tell you again how glad I am this moment has arrived.

My dear Washington Irving, I cannot thank you enough for your cordial and generous praise, or tell you what deep and lasting gratification it has given me. I hope to have many letters from you, and to exchange a frequent correspondence. I send this to say so. After the first two or three I shall settle down into a connected style, and become gradually rational.

You know what the feeling is, after having written a letter, sealed it, and sent it off. I shall picture you reading this, and answering it before it has lain one night in the post-office. Ten to one that before the fastest packet could reach New York I shall be writing again.

Do you suppose the post-office clerks care to receive letters? I have my doubts. They get into a dreadful habit of indifference. A postman, I imagine, is quite callous. Conceive his delivering one to himself, without being startled by a preliminary double knock.

Always your faithful Friend,

CHARLES DICKENS

5. *Charles Dickens to Douglas Jerrold*

CREMONA, Saturday Night,
Sixteenth November, 1844

MY DEAR JERROLD—

As half a loaf is better than no bread, so I hope that half a sheet of paper may be better than none at all, coming from one who is anxious to live in your memory and friendship. I should have redeemed the pledge I gave you in this regard long since, but occupation at one time, and absence from pen and ink at another, have prevented me.

Forster has told you, or will tell you, that I very much wish you to hear my little Christmas book; and I hope you will meet me, at his bidding, in Lincoln's Inn Fields.[1] I have tried to strike a blow upon that part of the brass countenance of wicked Cant,[2] when such a compliment is sorely needed at this time, and I trust that the result of my training is at least the exhibition of a strong desire to make it a staggerer. If you should think at the end of the four rounds (there are no more) that the said Cant, in the language of Bell's Life, "comes up piping," I shall be very much the better for it.

I was rather shocked yesterday (I am not strong in geographical details) to find that Romeo[3] was only banished twenty-five miles. That is the distance between Mantua and Verona. The latter is a quaint old place with great houses in it that are now solitary and shut up—exactly the place it ought to be. The former has a great many apothecaries in it at this mo-

ment, who could play that part to the life. For of all the stagnant ponds I ever beheld, it is the greenest and weediest. I went to see the old palace of the Capulets, which is still distinguished by their cognisance (a hat carved in stone on the courtyard wall). It is a miserable inn. The court was full of crazy coaches, carts, geese, and pigs, and was ankle-deep in mud and dung. The garden is walled off and built out. There was nothing to connect it with its old inhabitants, and a very unsentimental lady at the kitchen door. The Montagues used to live some two or three miles off in the country. It does not appear quite clear whether they ever inhabited Verona itself. But there is a village bearing their name to this day, and traditions of the quarrels between the two families are still as nearly alive as anything can be, in such a drowsy neighbourhood.

You rather entertained a notion, once, of coming to see me at Genoa. I shall return straight, on the ninth of December, limiting my stay in town to one week. Now couldn't you come back with me? The journey, that way, is very cheap, costing little more than twelve pounds; and I am sure the gratification to you would be high. I am lodged in quite a wonderful place, and would put you in a painted room, as big as a church and much more comfortable. There are pens and ink upon the premises; orange trees, gardens, battledores and shuttlecocks, rousing wood-fires for evenings, and a welcome worth having.

Come. Letter from a gentleman in Italy to Brad-

bury and Evans [1] in London. Letter from a gentleman in a country gone to sleep to a gentleman in a country that would go to sleep too, and never wake again, if some people had their way. You can work in Genoa. The house is used to it. It is exactly a week's post. Have that portmanteau looked to, and when we meet, say, "I am coming."

I have never in my life been so struck by any place as by Venice. It is the wonder of the world. Dreamy, beautiful, inconsistent, impossible, wicked, shadowy old place. I entered it by night, and the sensation of that night and the bright morning that followed is a part of me for the rest of my existence. And, oh God, the cells below the water, underneath the Bridge of Sighs; the nook where the monk came at midnight to confess the political offender; the bench where he was strangled; the deadly little vault in which they tied him in a sack, and the stealthy crouching little door through which they hurried him into a boat, and bore him away to sink him where no fisherman dare cast his net—all shown by torches that blink and wink, as if they were ashamed to look upon the gloomy theatre of sad horrors; past and gone as they are, these things stir a man's blood, like a great wrong or passion of the instant. And with these in their minds, and with a museum there, having a chamber full of such frightful instruments of torture as the devil in a brain fever could scarcely invent, there are hundreds of parrots, who will declaim to you in speech and print, by the hour together, on the degeneracy of the times in which a rail-

road is building across the water at Venice; instead of going down on their knees, the drivellers, and thanking Heaven that they live in a time when iron makes roads, instead of prison bars and engines for driving screws into the skulls of innocent men. I could almost turn bloody-minded, and shoot the parrots of our island with as little compunction as Robinson Crusoe shot the parrots in his.

I have not been in bed, these ten days, after five in the morning, and have been travelling many hours every day. If this be the cause of my inflicting a very stupid and sleepy letter on you, my dear Jerrold, I hope it will be a kind of signal at the same time, of my wish to hail you lovingly even from this sleepy and unpromising state.—And believe me as I am,

ALWAYS YOUR FRIEND AND ADMIRER

6. *Charles Dickens to W. Wilkie Collins*

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Sixth June, 1854

MY DEAR COLLINS:

Form of trip appointment, in compliance with Act of Parliament. Victoria, cap. 7, sec. 304.	
	Day, Thursday.
	Hour, Quarter past 11 a. m.
	Place, Dover Terminus, London Bridge.
	Destination, Tunbridge Wells.
	Description of Railway Qualification, Return Ticket.
	(Signed) CHARLES DICKENS Entd

7. *Charles Dickens to F. D. Finlay*

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,
Tuesday, Third September, 1867

This is to certify that the undersigned victim of a periodical paragraph-disease, which usually breaks out once in every seven years (proceeding to England by the overland route to India and per Cunard line to America, where it strikes the base of the Rocky Mountains, and, rebounding to Europe, perishes on the steppes of Russia), is *not* in a " critical state of health," and has *not* consulted " eminent surgeons," and never was better in his life, and is *not* recommended to proceed to the United States for " cessation from literary labour," and has not had so much as a headache for twenty years. CHARLES DICKENS

8. *Charles Dickens to Miss Dickens*

PARKER HOUSE, BOSTON,
Thursday, Twenty-first November, 1867

I arrived here on Tuesday night, after a very slow passage from Halifax against head-winds. All the tickets for the first four readings here (all yet announced) were sold immediately on their being issued.

You know that I begin on the Second of December with *Carol* and *Trial*? Shall be heartily glad to begin to count the readings off.

This is an immense hotel, with all manner of white marble public passages and public rooms. I live in

a corner high up, and have a hot and cold bath in my bedroom (communicating with the sitting-room), and comforts not in existence when I was here before. The cost of living is enormous, but happily we can afford it. I dine to-day with Longfellow, Emerson, Holmes, and Agassiz. Longfellow was here yesterday. Perfectly white in hair and beard, but a remarkably handsome and notable-looking man. The city has increased enormously in five-and-twenty years. It has grown more mercantile—is like Leeds mixed with Preston, and flavored with New Brighton; but for smoke and fog you substitute an exquisitely bright light air. I found my rooms beautifully decorated (by Mrs. Fields) with choice flowers, and set off by a number of good books. I am not much persecuted by people in general, as Dolby [1] has happily made up his mind that the less I am exhibited for nothing the better. So our men sit outside the room door and wrestle with mankind.

We had speech-making and singing in the saloon of the *Cuba* after the last dinner of the voyage. I think I have acquired a higher reputation from drawing out the captain, and getting him to take the second in "All's Well," and likewise in "There's not in the wide world" (your parent taking first), than from anything previously known of me on these shores. I hope the effect of these achievements may not dim the lustre of the readings. We also sang (with a Chicago lady, and a strong-minded woman from I don't know where) "Auld Lang Syne," with a tender melancholy, expres-

sive of having all four been united from our cradles. The more dismal we were, the more delighted the company were. Once (when we paddled i' the burn) the captain took a little cruise round the compass on his own account, touching at the "Canadian Boat Song," and taking in supplies at "Jubilate," "Seas between us braid ha' roared," and roared like the seas themselves. Finally, I proposed the ladies in a speech that convulsed the stewards, and we closed with a brilliant success. Hillard has just been in and sent his love "to those dear girls." He has grown much older. He is now District Attorney of the State of Massachusetts, which is a very good office. Best love to your aunt and Katie, and Charley and all his house, and all friends.

XXX

THE letters of James Russell Lowell (1819–1891) fill two large volumes, in spite of the fact that he frequently expressed a distaste for letter-writing. Although he had the reputation at Harvard of being indolent, yet few men have labored more conscientiously than he, as teacher, editor, writer, lecturer, and diplomat. He said he was "forever busy." While under the restraint and pressure of his various duties, his letters to his intimate friends afforded him an outlet for free, spontaneous expression. Many of his most characteristic letters are addressed to Miss Jane Norton, the daughter of Charles Eliot Norton. James T. Fields was an author of distinction and editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Thomas Bailey Aldrich, a writer of polished verse and author of *The Story of a Bad Boy*, was one of Lowell's closest friends. Lowell's rich experiences in America and Europe supplied his ready pen with delightful material for letter-writing.

1. *James Russell Lowell to Miss Norton* *

(Beverly) Ship *Underhill*, Eldrege, Mistress,
Lat. 40° 20′ Long. (bad observation).
Islands of Sirens bearing E. S. E. 2½ miles.
Aug. 14, 1854

If I may trust a rather poor memory—without a book to make a crutch of—I ought to thank you for having given me so happy an example of the force of habit. Some four thousand years ago the fountain of Arethusa [1] went down near Eleusis (?) and came up at Syracuse in

* From *Letters of James Russell Lowell*. Copyright, 1893, by Harper & Brothers.

Sicily, and now, translated to America and tolerably well bound, it has contrived to do the same thing between Shady Hill and Newport. I am quite content. I could not have a better minister resident, nor one less intrusive, only reminding you of me when you choose to give an audience, and then always saying better things than I could. So pray do not give her her passports yet. I shall bring the "Conversations" when I am happy enough to come myself.

Now—in order that you may not fancy (as most persons who go to Rhode Island do) that Newport is the only place in the world where there is any virtue in salt water—I will say a word or two of Beverly. Country and seashore are combined here in the most charming way. Find the Yankee word for Sorrento,[1] and you have Beverly—it is only the Bay of Naples translated into the New England dialect. The ocean and the forest are not estranged here, and the trees trust themselves down to the water's edge most confidingly. In some places the ivy plays in the air and the kelp in the water, like children of different ranks making shy advances to each other. Close behind us rises a rocky hill, and the pine woods begin—wonderful woods, called Witch Woods by the natives because it is so easy to lose your way in them. All through them strange rocks bulge out—amphibious-looking hybrids between seashore and inland—their upper edges fringed lightly with ferns that seem to entangle the sunshine and hold it fast, and their bases rough with queer lichens that look like water-weeds. I think there is

more ocean than land in the blood of these rocks, and they always seem to me listening and waiting for the waves. If you leap down from one of them you sink ankle-deep in springy pine-tassel or moss. Somewhere in these woods is a visionary clearing and farm-house, which every one gets a glimpse of—but no man hath seen twice. You hear the crowing of cocks, the contented low of cattle rubbing their soft throats over the polished bars, and sometimes a muffled throb of flails; presently, through some wood-gap, you see the chimney and the blue breath of the hearth in the cool air, but when you have made your way through the next thicket, all is gone. I think it is the farm of one of the old Salem warlocks,[1] and buy my vegetables warily, fearful of some ill thing. Here and there, climbing some higher rock, you get a gleam of sea through some scoop in the woods,—a green cup filled half with potable gold.

We are in a little house close upon the road, with the sea just below, as seen through a fringe of cedar, wild cherry and barberry. Beyond this fringe is a sand-beach where we bathe. As I look out of my window I see the flicker of the sea's golden scales (which the moon will by and by touch with her long wand and turn to silver) stretching eastward forever. We are at the foot of a bay, across the mouth of which lies a line of islands—some bare rock, some shrubby, and some wooded. These are the true islands of the Sirens. One has been disenchanted by a great hotel, to which a steamboat runs innumerably every day with a band—

the energetic *boong! boong!—boong! boong! boong!*—of the bass drum being all we hear. Our sunset is all in the southeast, and every evening the clouds and islands bloom and the slow sails are yellowed and the dories become golden birds swinging on the rosy water.

Well, well, after all, I am only saying that Nature is here as well as at Newport, and that she has not lost her knack at miracles. But at Newport you have no woods, and ours are so grand and deep and unconverted! They have those long pauses of conscious silence that are so fine, as if the spirit that inhabits them were hiding from you and holding its breath—and then all the leaves stir again, and the pines cheat the rocks with their mock surf, and that invisible bird that haunts such solitudes calls once and is answered, and then silence again. I would not have told you how much better this is than your Rhode Island glories—only that you Newport folks always seem a little (I must go to my Yankee) *stuck up*, as if Newport were all the world, and you the saints that had inherited it. But I hope to see you and Newport soon, and I will be lenient. You shall find in me the Beverly grandeur of soul which can acknowledge alien merit.

2. *James Russell Lowell to Miss Norton*

MADISON, WISCONSIN, April 9, 1855

Though I have been in such dreadfully low spirits since I left home that I have not seen much to write about, yet I like to keep my promises, and as I have

had one *very* pleasant adventure, I will try to make a letter of it. I will premise generally that I hate this business of lecturing. To be received at a bad inn by a solemn committee, in a room with a stove that smokes but not exhilarates, to have three cold fish-tails laid in your hand to shake, to be carried to a cold lecture-room, to read a cold lecture to a cold audience, to be carried back to your smoke-side, paid, and the three fish-tails again—well, it is not delightful exactly. On the whole, I was so desperate that, after a week of it, I wrote out thither to be let off—but they would not, and so here I am. I shall go home with six hundred dollars in my pocket, and one of those insects so common in Italy and Egypt in my ear. Sometimes, though, one has very pleasant times, and one gets *tremendous* puffs in the local papers.

But I have a nice little oasis to talk about—so I will to that. I arrived, then, at Bagg's Hotel, in Utica, which (the hotel) has a railroad running *through it*—so you may fancy how pleasant it is—to dinner, and it occurred to me that it was Saturday, that I was only twelve miles from Trenton Falls,[1] and that I had no engagement till Monday evening. To the Falls, then, I would go and spend the Sunday. Mr. Baggs assured me that it was in vain; that Mr. Moore, at Trenton, would not "take anybody in" (so he dubiously phrased it) in winter; and that I should have my cold drive for my pains. I had travelled enough not to take anything for granted,—so I hired a "cutter" and a pair of horses and a huge buffalo-skin coat to drive, and set

out. It was snowy and blowy and cold, and part of the way the snow was level with the backs of the horses (Bison-skin had prophesied it, but I did not believe till I saw)—and think of it, on the 24th of March!

We drove fast in spite of the deep snow, for we "had the pootiest pair o' colts that went eout o' Utiky," and in about an hour and a half drew up in front of the huge deserted hotel, its dark colour looking drearier in contrast with the white snow and under the gathering twilight. I tried the front door in vain. The roll of skins suggested a door below. I went, knocked, and a grave, respectable man in black (looking not the least like an American landlord) opened the door and said, "Good-evening, sir."

"Good-evening, sir. Mr. Moore, I believe?"

"That's my name, sir."

"Can you lodge me till Monday?"

"We do not keep our house open in winter, and prefer to live privately, sir."

This was said in such a quiet way that I saw there was nothing more to be said on the tavern side—so I changed my front.

"I have seen the Falls several times in summer, and thought I should like to see them in their winter fashions. They must be even more beautiful, I fancy. I hoped also to have a quiet Sunday here, after a week's railroading"—and I gave a despairing look at the gloomy weather and the heap of bison-skin.

Mr. Moore loves his Falls, and I had touched him.

"I will ask Mrs. Moore, and see what she says; she will have all the trouble."

He opened a door, said something I could not hear, and instantly a sweet, motherly voice said,

"Certainly, by all means."

"Mrs. Moore says she will be happy to have you stay. Walk in, sir. I will have your luggage attended to."

Meanwhile I had not told Mr. Moore my name, of which (however illustrious) I feared he might never have heard, and there was no mark on trunk or carpet-bag by which he could discover it. Presently we sat down to tea, and I was charmed with the gentle and affectionate atmosphere of the family. There was a huge son, and two little girls and a boy—I wish Wendell Holmes could have seen them—the stoutest children I ever saw. Then there was a daughter-in-law—a very sweet-looking girl with her first child, a lovely baby of a year old who never cried. I know that first babies never do—but *he* never *did*. After tea Mr. Moore and I smoked and talked together. I found him a man with tastes for medals, pictures, engravings, music, and fruit culture. He played very well on a parlor-organ, and knew many artists whom I also knew. Moreover, he was a Unitarian. So we got along nicely. Mrs. Moore was handsome and gentle. She was a granddaughter of Roger Sherman! After our cigars Mr. Moore showed me his books, and among others the "Homes of American Authors." He asked me if I had ever seen it. Here was a chance to intro-

duce myself quietly. So I said, "Yes, and I will show you where I live." I showed him accordingly the print of Elmwood, and he grew more friendly than ever.

I went out in the night to get my first sight of the Falls, refusing to be accompanied and profusely warned of the danger of the ravine's frozen and slippery edges. They were slippery, but I did not tumble in, as you see. (Forgive my chirography. I am writing with tears in my eyes, for my stove smokes worse than common.) As I looked down into the gorge, after wandering through the giant hemlocks, nothing could be finer. The edges of the stream were frozen and covered with light, new-fallen snow, so that by contrast the stream seemed black, wholly black. The night gave mystery to the profound abyss, and I fancied it was the Water of Oblivion I was gazing down at. From afar I heard the murmur of the first fall, and I felt again a true poetic enthusiasm revive in me, dead for so long. I feared to stay, there was such an impulse to leap down. For the first time I became conscious of the treachery of the ice-edge, and I walked backward cautiously into the wood. Then I made my way among the trees and over fallen hemlock trunks, guided by the increasing murmur to the first fall. I now found (or guessed) why there was so little roar. The fall was entirely muffled in ice. I could just see it through the darkness, a wall, or rather veil, of ice covering it wholly. It was a perfectly frozen waterfall, as I discovered the next morning—for the front of it had thawed in the sun so that it was polished as water and was ribbed and

wrinkled like a cascade, while the heap of snowy *debris* below made the spray. I went back to the house and (charming inconsistency of this double nature of ours!), with the tears scarce dry in my eyes, sat down to smoke another cigar with Mr. Moore and to play Dr. Busby with the children.

Here I was broken off short—and have not had a moment since; I am now at the Burnet House, Cincinnati, and it is Friday, the 12th April. I go on.

In the morning Mr. Moore took me out and showed me the best points of view, after which he considerately left me. It was a cold morning, and the spray, as it rose, crystalized in feathers, as fine as those of a moth, on the shrubs and trees and sides of the gorge. For a few moments the sun shone and lighted up all these delicate ice-ferns, which, in texture, were like those star-shaped flakes that fall from very cold clouds. Afterwards I saw Niagara, but he is a coarser artist, and had plastered all the trees with ice like alabaster. He is a clumsy fellow compared with Cuyahora. The ice-work along the rock at Trenton is very lovely. Sometimes it hangs lightly, honeycombed by the sun and bent by the wind from the fall as it froze—looking like the Venetian lace drapery of an altar. At other times it has frozen in filtering stalactites precisely like organ pipes.

3. *James Russell Lowell to Miss Norton*

ELMWOOD, Aug. 12, 1861

Two important events have taken place lately, which I shall mention in the order of their respective greatness. 1st. The Agricultural Festival; 2nd. The election of Mayor. And now of the Cerealia.[1] (Don't confound this with Serialia and suppose I have taken up the Atlantic again.) You must know then that Cambridge boasts of two distinguished farmers—Mr. John Holmes, of Holmes Place, and him who would be, in a properly constituted order of things, the Marquess of Thompson Lot with a p. The Marquess, fearing that (since Squire Holmes cultivated his own estate with his own hands and a camp-stool) his rival might be in want of food and too proud to confess it, generously resolved to give him a dinner, which, to save his feelings, he adroitly veiled with the pretence of an Agricultural Festival and Show of Vegetables. Dr. Howe and Mr. Storey were the other guests, "when" (as the "Annual Register" would say) the following vegetables were served up with every refinement of the culinary art: 1° Eggplants; 2° Squash; 3° Beets; 4° Carrots; 5° Potatoes; 6° Tomatoes; 7° Turnips; 8° Beans; 9° Corn; 10° Cucumbers (and not exhibited, partly out of modesty and partly for want of suitable dishes, but alluded to modestly from time to time), 11° Cabbages; 12° Salsify. Of fruits there was a variety also from the estate, consisting chiefly of 1° Raspberries and 2° Blackberries. Cider, also from the estate, was kept back out of

tenderness to the guests, and because that was home-made vinegar in the casters. "After the cloth was removed" the chairman rose, and with suitable solemnity gave the first regular toast—"Speed the Plough." This was acknowledged by Mr. Holmes in a neat speech. He said that "he felt himself completely *squashed* by the abundance before him. That, as there was nothing wanting, so nothing could be marked with a *caret* ∧. That Micawber [1] himself would have been pleased with the *turnups*, than which who nose anything more charmingly retroussé? That he could say with great Julius,[2] *Veni, vidi, vici*, I came and saw a *beet*. That he could but stammer his astonishment at a board so cu-cumbered with delicacies. That he envied the potatoes their eyes to look on such treasures. That the Tom-martyrs were worthy the best ages of the Church, and fit successors of St. Thomas. That with such *corn* who would not be a toemartyr? That he hoped no one would criticise his remarks in a punkintilious spirit." This, as you will imagine, is quite an inadequate report of the remarks he might have made. The dinner went off with great good humour and we had cards in the evening. Your affectionate

THOMPSON LOT

4. *James Russell Lowell to James T. Fields*

ELMWOOD, March 23, 1869

MY DEAR FIELDS,—

I don't see why the New York poets should have all the sonnets to themselves, nor why we shouldn't be

literary now and then as well as they. With the help of Walker's *Rhyming Dictionary* and Lemprière, I have hammered out fourteen lines to you, which I honestly think are as much like Shakespeare's sonnets as some others I have seen. Your name does not consent so kindly to an invocation as Stoddard [1] or Taylor or Boker or Richard or Bayard, which, albeit trochees, may well displace an iambus in the first foot.

"Richard, thy verse that like molasses runs," launches your sonnet without a hitch. I tried at first to evade the difficulty by beginning boldly,

> James T., the year, in its revolving round,
> Hath brought once more the tributary pig—

but it wants that classical turn which lends grace to your true sonnets as shaped by the great masters in this kind of writing. So I have hit on another expedient, which I think will serve the turn. As I find some of my critics blame me as too scholarly and obscure because I use such words as microcosm—which send even *well-read* men to their dictionaries—I have added a few notes:

> Poseidon[1] Fields, who dost the [2] *Atlantic* [3] sway,
> Making it swell, or flattening at thy will!

[1] "Poseidon," a fabulous deity, called by the Latins Neptunus; here applied to Fields as presiding over the issues of the *Atlantic*.

[2] "the Atlantic," to be read "th'Atlantic," in order to avoid the *hiatus* or gap where two vowels come together. Authority for this will be found in Milton and other poets.

[3] "*Atlantic*," a well-known literary magazine.

O glaucous [1] one, be thou propitious still
To me, a minnum [2] dandled on thy spray! [3]
Eftsoons [4] a milk-white porkerlet [5] we slay.
No sweeter e'er repaid Eumæus' [6] skill;
A blameless Lamb [7] thereon might feed his fill,
Deeming he cropped the new-sprung herb [8] of May.
Our board do thou and Amphitrite [9] grace;
Archbishop [10] of our literary sea,
Lay by thy trident-crozier for a space,

[1] "Glaucous," between blue and green, an epithet of Poseidon, and an editor who shows greenness is sure to look blue in consequence.

[2] "Minnum," *vulgo pro minnow*, utpote species *minima* piscium.

[3] "Dandled on thy spray!"—a striking figure. Horace has *piscium et summa genus hæsit ulmo*, but the poverty of the Latin did not allow this sport of fancy with the double meaning of the word *spray*.

[4] "Eftsoons."—This word (I think) may be found in Spencer. It means soon after, i. e., before long.

[5] "Porkerlet," a pretty French diminutive, as in *roitelet*.

[6] "Eumæus," the swineherd of Ulysses, a character in Homer.

[7] "Lamb," a well-known literary character of the seventeenth century, chiefly remembered for having burnt his house to roast a favorite pig. He invented mint-sauce.

[8] "Herb"—grass—Borrow a Bible, and you will find the word thus used in that once popular work.

[9] "Amphitrite," the beautiful spouse of Poseidon.

[10] "Archbishop."—This is the Elizabethan style. (N. B., the play is upon *sea* and *see*.) This term is beautifully, may I not say piously, appropriate, since the Grecian gods have all been replaced by Christian saints, and St. Anthony of Padua converted the finny nomads of the deep. He found a ready *herring*, I suppose.

And try our forks; or, earless [1] to our plea,
Let this appease thee and the frown displace:
The Gurneys come and John [2]—then answer, *Oui!* [3]

There! I think I have made that clear enough except in one particular, namely, its meaning. I don't admit that a sonnet needs anything so vulgar—but this one means that I want you and Mrs. Fields to eat a tithe-pig [1] ('tis an offering of William's) with us in about ten days from now. I will fix the day as soon as I find out when the fairy creature will be ripe.

I have corrected nearly all of one volume, and dreary work it is. I know nothing more depressing than to look one's old poems in the face. If Rousseau's [2] brats had come back upon his hands from the *Enfans Trouvés*, he would have felt just as I do.

Always yours
J. R. L.

[1] "Earless."—This is not to be taken literally, as in the case of Defoe, or as Hotspur misinterprets Glendower's "bootless." It means simply *deaf*.

[2] "John."—It is hardly necessary to say that there is but one John—to wit, J. Holmes, Esq., of Holmes Place.

[3] "Oui," a neat transition to the French tongue, conveying at once a compliment to the learning of the person addressed and an allusion to his editorial position. Editors and kings always say *We*.

5. *James Russell Lowell to Miss Norton*

ELMWOOD, Sept. 6, 1869

1. You order me, dear Jane, to write a sonnet,
2. Behold the initial verse and eke the second;
3. This is the third (if I have rightly reckoned),
4. And now I clap the fourth and fifth upon it
5. As easily as you would don your bonnet;
6. The sixth comes tripping in as soon as beckoned,
7. Nor for the seventh is my brain infécund;
8. A shocking rhyme ! but, while you pause to con it,
9. The eighth is finished, with the ninth to follow;
10. As for the tenth, why, that must wedge between
11. The ninth and this I am at present scrawling;
12. Twelve with nine matches pat as wings of swallow;
13. Blushingly after that comes coy thirteen;
14. And this crowns all, as sailor his tarpauling.

I confess that I stole the idea of the above sonnet from one of Lope de Vega's,[1] written under similar circumstances. Now, in that very sonnet Lope offers you a bit of instruction by which I hope you will profit and never again ask for one in twelve lines. He says, in so many words,

Catorce versos dicen que es soneto [2]

one more than even the proverbial baker's dozen, which shows the unthriftiness of poets in their own wares—or, perhaps you will say, their somewhat tiresome liberality. I dare say most sonnets would be better if cut off, like the cur's tail, just behind the ears. Having given you this short and easy lesson in the essential element of Petrarch's [3] inspiration, I now proceed to do another

sonnet in the received sentimental style of those somewhat artificial compositions.

> Ah, think not, dearest Maid, that I forget!
> Say, in midwinter doth the prisoned bee
> Forget the flowers he whilom held in fee?
> In free-winged fantasy he hovers yet
> O'er pansy-tufts and beds of mignonette.
> And I, from honeyed cells of memory
> Drawing in darkened days my stores of thee,
> Seek La Pacotte on dream-wings of regret.
> I see thee vernal as when first I saw,
> Buzzing in quest of sugar for my rhyme;
> And this, my heart assures me, is Love's law,
> That he annuls the season's frosty clime,
> And, warmly wrapped against Oblivion's flaw,
> Tastes in his garnered sweets the blossoming thyme.

Perhaps the eighth verse would be better thus,

> Fly on dream-wings to La Pacotte, you bet!

That, at least, has the American flavor, which our poetry is said to lack. I do not mean by the twelfth verse to insinuate anything unfeeling. It is merely to be in keeping with the laws of the sonnet, and to bring the thought back to where it set out, like a kitten playing with its own tail. But I will confess to you that I am getting so gray that *I* see it; so you may be sure there is not much to choose between me and the traditional badger. Happily, I am grown no stouter, though already "more fat than bard beseems."

But why have I not written all this while? For all August I have a valid excuse. First, I was writing

a poem, and second, a pot-boiler. The poem turned out to be something immense, as the slang is nowadays, that is, it ran on to eight hundred lines of blank verse. I hope it is good, for it fairly trussed me at last and bore me up as high as my poor lungs will bear into the heaven of invention. I was happy writing it, and so steeped in it that if I had written to you it would have been in blank verse. It is a kind of religious poem, and is called "A Day at Chartres." I remember telling Charles once that I had it under my hair. I can't tell you how it will stand. Already I am beginning to—to—you know what I mean—to taste my champagne next morning. However, you will see it in the January *Atlantic*, and you must try to like it and me. I can't spare either.

6. *James Russell Lowell to Thomas Bailey Aldrich*

ELMWOOD, Nov. 30, 1869

MY DEAR ALDRICH,—

It is a capital little book [1]—but I had read it all before, and liked it thoroughly. It has been pretty much all my novel reading all summer. I think it is wholesome, interesting, and above all, natural. The only quarrel I have with you is that I found in it that infamous word "transpired." E-pluribus-unum it! Why not "happened"? You are on the very brink of the pit. I read in the paper t'other day that some folks had "extended a dinner to the Hon." Somebody or other. There was something pleasing to the baser man

in fancying it held out in a pair of tongs, as too many of our Hon'bles deserve—but consider where English is going!

I know something about Rivermouth myself—only before you were born. I remember in my seventh year opening a long red chest in the "mansion" of the late famous Dr. Brackett, and being confronted with a skeleton—the first I had ever seen. The *Mysteries of Udolpho* [1] were nothing to it, for a child, somehow, is apt to think that these anatomies are always made so by foul means, a creed which I still hold to a certain extent.

However, I am not writing to tell you about myself—but merely to say how much I like your little book, I wish it had been twice as large! I shall send you a thin one of my own before long, and shall be content if it give you half the pleasure. Make my kind remembrances acceptable to Mrs. Aldrich, and tell the twins I wish they may both grow up Bad Boys.

Cordially yours
J. R. Lowell

7. *James Russell Lowell to Mrs. Lowell*

Victoria Hotel, Dresden, Oct. 16, 1881

It is just twenty-five years since I was in Dresden, and there is something sad in coming back an old man to a place familiar to you when much younger. But I must take up my diary again. When I wrote yesterday (from Weimar) I was uncertain whether I should

see Goethe's house (I mean the inside of it) or not. At any rate, I would see the garden-house he built when he first came to Weimar. So I took the drollest little bow-legged valet-de-place, who touched his hat and called me *Excellenz* whenever he could catch my eye. I had taken him with the express stipulation that he shouldn't open his mouth, and this was the compromise he made. Our walk led through the Park and along the Ilm. The Park, except the paths, is left pretty much to nature. It is very charming. The garden-house turned out to be about twenty minutes' walk. It was a very simple affair of stone, about twenty feet square, roughly built, but beautifully set on the edge of a meadow sloping to the river. It was odd to find that my associations with Weimar, which are so vivid that I seem to have seen the persons and can hardly persuade myself I did not know Frau von Stein,[1] should be more than a century old. Goethe was building this house just as our Revolution began. When I got back I found a card from Baron v. Brincken, informing me that Herr v. Goethe would be glad to see me at half-past one. So I saw what I went to Weimar for after all. There was a small collection of antique gems, of drawings and engravings, and of very good majolica. There were also some bronzes, none of them remarkable. The *Studienzimmer* was what interested me most—the plain little table and desk, with the chair waiting its master. Out of it opened the sleeping-room with the bed in which he died,—about as large as a Spanish *alcoba*, and showing how little good air has to do with

long life. Everything was very dingy, and the study especially ill-lighted. I have an engraving of it somewhere, so that I have been wondering ever since if I had not seen it before.

I am going out presently to see the Sistine Madonna and a few other old friends again. *They* will not have changed or grown older.

XXXI

Charles Kingsley (1819–1875) was an English poet, clergyman, and novelist. He held the curacy of Eversley, in Hampshire, for thirty-three years, spending his life in the active duties of his position, yet finding time to write prolifically. The following letter is an excellent example of a spontaneous overflow of spirits and genuine, unaffected good-humor.

Charles Kingsley to Mr. Wood

Eversley, August 5, 1842

Peter:

Whether in the glaring saloons of Almack's, or making love in the equestrian stateliness of the park, or the luxurious recumbency of the ottoman, whether breakfasting at one, or going to bed at three, thou art still Peter, the beloved of my youth, the staff of my academic days, the regret of my parochial retirement! —Peter! I am alone! Around me are the everlasting hills, and the everlasting bores of the country! My parish is peculiar for nothing but want of houses and abundance of peat bogs; my parishioners remarkable only for aversion to education, and a predilection for fat bacon. I am wasting my sweetness on the desert air—I say my sweetness, for I have given up smoking, and smell no more. Oh, Peter, Peter, come down and see me! Oh that I could behold your head towering above the fir-trees that surround my lonely dwelling. Take pity on me! I am "like a kitten in the washhouse

copper with the lid on!" And, Peter, prevail on some of your friends here to give me a day's trout-fishing, for my hand is getting out of practice. But, Peter, I am, considering the oscillations and perplex circumgurgitations of this piece-meal world, an improved man. I am much more happy, much more comfortable, reading, thinking, and doing my duty—much more than ever I did before in my life. Therefore I am not discontented with my situation or regretful that I buried my first-class in a country curacy, like the girl who shut herself up in a band-box on her wedding night (*vide* Rogers's "Italy.") [1] And my lamentations are not general (for I do not want an inundation of the froth and tidewash of Babylon the Great), but particular, being solely excited by want of thee, oh Peter, who are very pleasant to me, and wouldst be more so if thou wouldst come and eat my mutton, and drink my wine, and admire my sermons, some Sunday at Eversley.

Your faithful friend,

BOANERGES ROAR-AT-THE-CLODS

XXXII

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822–1888) was the famous son of a famous father, Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby. He was a poet, literary critic, and inspector of schools, who made substantial contributions to the history and literature of education in the Victorian Age. He was a broad-shouldered, manly Englishman, sun-burned and wind-worn, who loved the English country and was genuinely delighted with the appearance of the daffodils in spring. His letters are lucid, hearty, and wholesome; they breathe the freshness of out-door life. His life was full of exacting demands—examining teachers, inspecting schools, urging legislation for the improvement of educational conditions, writing essays and poems, and lecturing; yet his letters to his mother, his sister, his family, and friends are so voluminous that they constitute an excellent autobiography. He and Edward Fitzgerald are in the front rank of English letter-writers of the nineteenth century.

1. *Matthew Arnold to Miss Arnold* *

COBHAM, Sunday [May 25, 1879]

MY DEAREST FAN,

Fanny Lucy is gone to church, and I am alone in the house. Geist finds me dull and has begged me to let him out into the garden; now he has had his bark at the thrushes, and I hear him pattering upstairs to bed, his invariable resource when he is bored or sorrowful. The girls are at Harrow, as you know. It has been a most beautiful day, and the foliage is almost all out, and now

* From *The Letters of Matthew Arnold.* Copyright 1895, by the Macmillan Company.

in a day or two we shall have the May and the Chestnut blossom. I have never known the birds so rich and strong in their singing; I had two blackbirds and three thrushes running about together on the grass under my window as I was getting up yesterday, and a stockdove has built her nest in the leaning ivied fir-tree which you will remember, between the house and the stables. So there is plenty of music, and the cuckoo comes in amidst it all. I am told by the natives that the nightingale used always to build in the shrubberies of the cottage, but she has given up that good habit; however, all around us the nightingales positively swarm. We dined at Effingham last night, and twice as we drove home the man stopped to call our attention to the chorus of nightingales. At one place, a thicket just before entering upon Effingham Common, they were almost maddeningly beautiful. It is a great loss to the North and the South-west of England not to have them; their extraordinary effectiveness is shown by even the poor people being so much interested about them and always knowing their habits and haunts. I should like to have you here for the cowslips and the nightingales; and it really must be arranged next year, if we live. The effect of reading so much of Wordsworth lately has been to make me feel more keenly than usual the beauty of the common incidents of the natural year, and I am sure that is a good thing. I have got a week before me which I don't much care about; three dinners in London, and I am to be taken to the Derby[1] by George Smith. He offered to take me and show me the whole thing, and

it seems absurd never to have seen such a famous sight, but at present I look forward to the day as a boring one, and wish it was over. I think about the Irish University Question [1] I have effected some real good. You saw Lowe's speech, and Sir Louis Mallet told me that Bright was dining with him the other night and said there was not a word of any argument for the Catholics which did not carry him thoroughly along with it. Now good-bye, my dearest Fan; how I wish we had you here with us.

Your ever most affectionate,
M. A.

2. *Matthew Arnold to his younger daughter*

RICHMOND, December 19, 1883

MY DARLING NELLY,

I must write to you from the capital of the Southern States, and the farthest point south that I shall reach. I left New York the day before yesterday in frost, with snow on the ground; snow lay all the way to Washington, though there it became less. At Washington I lectured, and I send you a cutting with a characteristic account of the lecture. This sort of thing appears every day. It is so common that one does not think of cutting it out and sending it, but I got this as I was getting into the train yesterday, and kept it for you. I started from Washington yesterday about eleven, and after we crossed the Potomac the snow disappeared altogether, the sun came out quite hot, and we had a

beautiful journey along the great inlets of the magnificent Chesapeake Bay for the first part, and then through a woody country afterwards, where was the hardest fighting during the war between the North and South. I passed Fredericksburg, where a great battle was, in which Stonewall Jackson was mortally wounded. At Washington I had a letter and a telegram from a General Anderson, asking me to stay with him at Richmond; I accepted, hearing that the hotels at Richmond were bad. At the station was a gentlemanlike, erect old man with a white moustache, and an open carriage and pair. We drove through the rather ragged streets of Richmond—a city of 70,000 people, which suffered terribly in the war, but is now recovering. Imagine my delight after the poverty of New England winter vegetation, of which you can form no idea,—not a laurel, not a holly—to find the magnolia growing, a standard tree, in the gardens before the Richmond houses. There was the horse-chestnut too, which I have never seen in the North, and fine planes. We drove to a capital house standing alone, with a large garden behind it; here I found Mrs. Anderson. I was most kindly received. Virginia, of which Richmond is the capital, was colonised not by Puritans, but by the English gentry, and the liking for England and its ways, and for the better sort of English people, has never failed. Mrs. Anderson has been an extremely pretty woman; her father was a great planter, who lived in an immense house in the country, with at least a hundred servants, I am told,—all blacks. She had three brothers in the Confederate Army, two

of them generals and one a colonel; the colonel and one of the generals were killed. It was getting dark, but she took me out for a drive to show me the view of the city with the James River bending through it, and sending up a beautiful sound from its rapids—no trout though, tell Dick. But my great pleasure was the Cemetery, where is a great pyramid over the common soldiers of the Confederate Army who fell in the war; but the beauty of the garden is in its dells and trees—such magnolias, such red-berried hollies, such oaks! It was dark when we got home, but I found callers, and then dressed with a good fire in my room, which even here one is glad of. There was a party at dinner, the cloth drawn after dinner in the old English fashion, and excellent Madiera; then we went to the lecture in a tumble-down old hall, but it did very well, as I was sure it would hold. My agents were against my coming here, and said I would have no audience, but I had all the "old families," who in general do not go to lectures; one gentleman came in twenty miles on an engine to hear me. Then I was taken to a ball by Mrs. Anderson, that I might see their beauties; I saw a good many pretty people, and one *very* pretty; also I was introduced to Miss Stonewall Jackson and her mother. We came back here, and I went to bed after hearing much about the war. I am asked to go down and stay at a country house near the sea to shoot duck, and at another up the country to shoot deer, but I must return to the North and my lecturing. I am going to drive about here this forenoon to see the town. To-morrow I lecture at

Baltimore, and next morning join mama and Lucy at Washington. Lucy has been having a good time at New York. Kiss Dick for me, and speak very, very kindly to a certain pair of boys, Miss Nelly. Tell them poor old master has broken one of his few remaining front teeth in trying to peel an orange—a great loss. I expect to like Washington, where we stay over Christmas Day; then we go to Philadelphia. Remember me to Eliza and Jane. And now, my dearest, dearest child, I must stop.

Your own loving,
PAPA

XXXIII

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY (1825–1895) early manifested that quick, eager mind which made him later one of the greatest English scientists. In 1850 he wrote to his sister, "I will leave my mark somewhere, and it shall be clear and distinct T. H. H., his mark. and free from the abominable blur of cant, humbug, and self-seeking which surrounds everything in the present world."

Spencer, Tyndall, Darwin, Haeckel, and Dr. Anton Dohrn, the founder of the Marine Biological Station at Naples, were his closest friends. He was a versatile and voluminous letter-writer, even taking the time from his scientific researches to print a letter to his little grandson. One of his most unique letters was written to his daughter, Mrs. John Collier, the wife of the artist.

1. *Thomas Huxley to John Tyndall*

HOTEL DE GRANDE BRETAGNE, Naples,
March 31, 1872

MY DEAR TYNDALL,

Your very welcome letter did not reach me until the 18th of March, when I returned to Cairo from my expedition to Assouan. Like Johnny Gilpin,[1] I "little thought, when I set out, of running such a rig;" but while at Cairo I fell in with Ossory of the Athenæum, and a very pleasant fellow, Charles Ellis, who had taken a dahabieh,[2] and were about to start up the Nile. They invited me to take possession of a vacant third cabin, and I accepted their hospitality, with the intention of going as far as Thebes and returning on my own hook.

But when we got to Thebes I found there was no getting away again without much more exposure and fatigue than I felt justified in facing just then, and as my friends showed no disposition to be rid of me, I stuck to the boat, and only left them on the return voyage at Rodu, which is the terminus of the railway, about 150 miles from Cairo.

We had an unusually quick journey, as I was little more than a month away from Cairo, and as my companions made themselves very agreeable, it was very pleasant. I was not particularly well at first, but by degrees the utter rest of this "always afternoon" sort of life did its work, and I am as well and vigorous now as ever I was in my life.

Egypt interested me profoundly, but I must reserve the tale of all I did and saw there for word of mouth. From Alexandria I went to Messina, and thence made an excursion along the lovely Sicilian coast to Catania and Etna. The old giant was half-covered with snow, and this fact, which would have tempted you to go to the top, stopped me. But I went to the Val del Bove, whence all the great lava streams have flowed for the last two centuries, and feasted my eyes with its rugged grandeur. From Messina I came on here, and had the great good fortune to find Vesuvius in eruption. Before this fact the vision of good Bence Jones forbidding much exertion vanished into thin air, and on Thursday up I went in company with Ray Lankester and my friend Dohrn's father, Dohrn himself being unluckily away. We had a glorious day, and did not descend till late at

night. The great crater was not very active, and contented itself with throwing out great clouds of steam and volleys of red-hot stones now and then. These were thrown towards the south-west side of the cone, so that it was practicable to walk all round the northern and eastern lip, and look down into the Hell Gate. I wished you were there to enjoy the sight as much as I did. No lava was issuing from the great crater, but on the north side of this, a little way below the top, an independent cone had established itself as the most charming little pocket-volcano imaginable. It could not have been more than one hundred feet high, and at the top was a crater not more than six or seven feet across. Out of this, with a noise exactly resembling a blast furnace and a slowly-working high pressure steam engine combined, issued a violent torrent of steam and fragments of semi-fluid lava as big as one's fist, and sometimes bigger. These shot up sometimes as much as one hundred feet, and then fell down on the sides of the little crater, which could be approached within fifty feet without any danger. As darkness set in, the spectacle was most strange. The fiery stream found a lurid reflection in the slowly-drifting steam cloud, which overhung it, while the red-hot stones which shot through the cloud shone strangely beside the quiet stars in a moonless sky.

Not from the top of this cinder cone, but from its side, a couple of hundred feet down, a stream of lava issued. At first it was not more than a couple of feet wide, but whether from receiving accessions or merely from the

different form of slope, it got wider on its journey down to the Atrio del Cavallo, a thousand feet below. The slope immediately below the exit must have been near fifty, but the lava did not flow quicker than very thick treacle would do under like circumstances. And there was plenty of freshly cooled lava streams about, inclined at angles far greater than those which that learned Academician, Elie de Beaumont,[1] declared to be possible. Naturally I was ashamed of these impertinent lava currents, and felt inclined to call them "Laves mousseuses." [2]

Courage, my friend, behold land! I know you love my handwriting. I am off to Rome to-day, and this day-week, if all goes well, I shall be under my own roof-tree again. In fact I hope to reach London on Saturday evening. It will be jolly to see your face again.

Ever yours faithfully,

T. H. Huxley

2. *Thomas Huxley to his daughter*

Athenaeum Club, May 17, 1892

Dearest Babs,

As I was going along upper Thames Street just now, I saw between Nos. 170 and 211 (primary parenthesis but you would like to know what I was going along that odorous street for. Well, it was to enquire how the pen with which I am now writing—(2nd p. you see it is a new fangled fountain pen, warranted to cure the worst writing and always spell

properly (2nd p.)—works, because it would not work properly this morning. And the nice young woman who took it from me (3rd p.)—(as who should say you old foodle! (3rd p.)) inked her own fingers enormously (which I told her I was pleased they were her fingers rather than mine (4th p.))—But she only smole. (5th p.) (Close by was another shop where they sold hose (6 or 7 p.))—(india rubber, not knitted (n. p.))—(and warranted to let water through, not keep it out); and I asked for a garden syringe, thinking such things likely to be kept by hosiers of that sort—and they said they had not any, but found they had a remnant cheap (price 3s.) (n. n. p.) which is less than many people pay for the other hosiers' hose (end of pp.)) a doorpost at the side of the doorway of some place of business with this remarkable notice: Ruling Girls Wanted.

Don't you think you had better apply at once? Jack will give you a character, I am sure, on the side of the art of ruling, and I will speak for the science—also of hereditary (on mother's side) instinct.

Well, I am not sure about the pen yet—but there is no room for any more.

Ever your loving

DAD

Epistolary composition on the model of a Gladstonian speech to a deputation on women's suffrage.

3. *Thomas Huxley to John Tyndall*

4 Marlborough Place, Jan. 11, 1875

My dear old Shylock,[1]

My argosies have come in, and here is all that was written in the bond! If you want the pound of flesh too, you know it is at your service, and my Portia won't raise that pettifogging objection to shedding a little blood into the bargain, which that other one did.

Ever yours faithfully,

T. H. Huxley

XXXIV

CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON (1832–1898), better known as "Lewis Carroll," was one of eleven children. He studied at Rugby and Oxford, where he distinguished himself in mathematics. As a student at Oxford, he manifested an affection for the children of the masters and tutors and often told stories to them. Although a clergyman and mathematician of distinction, his fame probably rests on *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*. He had a large circle of friends among children, and his correspondence with them was extensive.

Lewis Carroll to Adelaide

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD,
March 8, 1880

MY DEAR ADA,—

(Isn't that your short name? "Adelaide" is all very well, but you see when one is *dreadfully* busy, one hasn't time to write such long words—particularly when it takes one half an hour to remember how to spell it—and even then one has to go and get a dictionary to see if one has spelt it right, and of course the dictionary is in another room, at the top of a high bookcase—where it has been for months and months and has got all covered with dust—so one has got to get a duster first of all, and nearly choke oneself in dusting it—and when one *has* made out at last which is dictionary and which is dust, even *then* there's the job of remembering which end of the alphabet "A" comes—

for one feels pretty certain it isn't in the *middle*—then one has to go and wash one's hands before turning over the leaves—for they've got so thick with dust one hardly knows them by sight—and as likely as not, the soap is lost, and the jug is empty; and there's no towel, and one has to spend hours and hours in finding things —and perhaps after all one has to go off to the shop to buy a new cake of soap—so, with all this bother, I hope you won't mind my writing it short and saying, "My dear Ada.") You said in your last letter you would like a likeness of me: so here it is, and I hope you will like it—I won't forget to call the next time but one I'm in Wallington.

Your very affectionate friend,

LEWIS CARROLL

XXXV

With the publication of *Treasure Island or The Sea-Cook* in book form, Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) became for the first time a popular writer. Almost every one offers the same testimony as the New Zealand boy who, when asked if he had read *Treasure Island*, said, "Every boy's read *Treasure Island*. I've read it four times." Dr. Bakewell wrote to Stevenson, telling him of the frank compliment, and warning him against the danger of overwork. The following letter is Stevenson's reply. The last four years of Stevenson's life were spent in Vailima, Samoa, where he showed himself not only a man of letters, but an employer of labor, an active planter, and a kind island chieftain. The best account of his life in Samoa is his *Vailima Letters*, edited by Sidney Colvin. It is hard to believe that the time will ever come when Stevenson will not be greatly beloved by both young and old.

1. *Robert Louis Stevenson to Dr. Bakewell*

Vailima, August 7, 1894

Dear Dr. Bakewell,

I am not more than human. I am more human than is wholly convenient and your anecdote was welcome. What you say about *unwilling work*, my dear Sir, is a consideration always present with me, and yet not easy to give its due weight to. You grow gradually into a certain income; without spending a penny more, with the same sense of restriction as before when you painfully scraped two hundred a year together, you find you have spent, and you cannot well stop spending, a far larger sum; and this expense can only be supported

by a certain profession. However, I am off work this month and occupy myself instead in weeding my cacao, papa chases,[1] and the like. I may tell you my average of work in favorable circumstances is far greater than you suppose; from six o'clock till eleven at least, and often till twelve, and again in the afternoon from two to four. My hand is quite destroyed as you may perceive to-day—to an unusual extent. I can sometimes write a decent fist still; but I have just returned with my arms all stung from three hours' work in the cacao.

XXXVI

Lafcadio Hearn (1850–1904) escapes classification. He was born in the Ionian Isles of English and Greek parentage and lived in England, Cincinnati, New Orleans, and Japan. After his marriage with a Japanese woman, he became a naturalized Japanese citizen. He was oriental in temperament, and called New York "that frightful cyclone of electricity and machinery." The recipients of his letters were fortunate, for he lavished on them the wealth of his poetical imagination and rich experience. His letters to Mrs. Elizabeth Bisland Wetmore, to Mr. H. E. Krehbiel, the well-known musical critic, and to Mr. Page M. Baker, former editor of the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, have a permanent place in the literature of letters. The following selections from his correspondence were addressed to his best friend, Henry Watkin of Cincinnati, an Englishman of broad culture and liberality of views, who had a printing shop. Most of the letters are signed "The Raven." Sometimes instead of the name, there is a sketch of the raven. Hearn frequently illustrated the text of his post cards and letters with sketches. His best known book is *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*.

1. *Lafcadio Hearn to Henry Watkin* *

Memphis, Oct. 31, 1877

Dear Old Dad:

I am writing in a great big, dreary room of this great, dreary house. It overlooks the Mississippi. I hear the puffing and the panting of the cotton boats and the deep calls of the river traffic; but I neither hear nor see

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the *Thompson Dean.* She will not be here this week, I am afraid, as she only left New Orleans to-day.

My room is carpetless and much larger than your office. Old blocked-up stairways come up here and there through the floor or down through the ceiling, and then suddenly disappear. There is a great red daub on one wall as though made by a bloody hand when somebody was staggering down the stairway. There are only a few panes of glass in the windows. I am the first tenant of the room for fifteen years. Spiders are busy spinning their dusty tapestries in every corner, and between the bannisters of the old stairways. The planks of the floor are sprung, and when I walk along the room at night it sounds as though Something or Somebody was following me in the dark. And then being in the third story makes it much more ghostly.

I had hard work to get a washstand and towel put in this great, dreary room; for the landlord had not washed his face for more than a quarter of a century, and regarded washing as an expensive luxury. At last I succeeded with the assistance of the barkeeper, who has taken a liking to me.

Perhaps you have seen by the paper that General N. B. Forrest [2] died here night before last. To-day they are burying him. I see troops of men in grey uniforms parading the streets, and the business of the city is suspended in honour of the dead. And they are firing weary, dreary minute guns.

I am terribly tired of this dirty, dusty, ugly town,—

a city only forty years old, but looking old as the ragged, fissured bluffs on which it stands. It is full of great houses, which were once grand, but are now as waste and dreary within, and without, as the huge building in which I am lodging for the sum of twenty-five cents a night. I am obliged to leave my things in the bar-keeper's care at night for fear of their being stolen; and he thinks me a little reckless because I sleep with my money under my pillow. You see the doors of my room—there are three of them—lock badly. They are ringing those dead bells every moment,—it is a very unpleasant sound. I suppose you will not laugh if I tell you that I have been crying a good deal of nights,—just like I used to do when a college boy returned from vacation. It is a lonely feeling, this of finding oneself alone in a strange city, where you never meet a face that you know; and when all the faces you did know seem to have been dead faces, disappeared for an indefinite time. I have not travelled enough the last years, I suppose: it does not do to become attached insensibly to places and persons. I suppose you have had some postal cards from me; and you are beginning to think I am writing quite often. I suppose I am, and you know the reason why; and perhaps you are thinking to yourself: "He feels a little blue now, and is accordingly very affectionate, &c.; but by and by he will be quite forgetful, and perhaps will not write so often as at present."

Well, I suppose you are right, I live in and by extremes and am on an extreme now. I write extremely

often, because I feel alone and extremely alone. By and by, if I get well, I shall write only by weeks; and with time perhaps only by months; and when at last comes the rush of business and busy newspaper work, only by years,—until the times and places of old friendship are forgotton, and old faces have become dim as dreams, and these little spider-threads of attachments will finally yield to the long strain of a thousand miles.

2. *Lafcadio Hearn to Henry Watkin*

438 West 57th Street, New York, 1887

Dear Old Man:

A delightful trip brought me safe and sound to New York, where my dear friend Krehbiel was waiting to take me to his cosy home. I cannot tell you how much our little meeting delighted me, or how much I regretted to depart so soon, or how differently I regarded our old friendship from my old way of looking at it. I was too young, too foolish, and too selfish to know you as you are, when we used to be together. Ten years made little exterior change in me, but a great deal of heart-change; and I saw you as you are,—noble and true and frank and generous, and felt I loved you more than I ever did before; felt also how much I owed you, and will always owe you,—and understood how much allowance you had made for all my horrid, foolish ways when I used to be with you. Well, I am sure to see you again.

I am having one of the most delightful holidays here

I ever had in my life; and I expect to stay a few weeks. If it were not for the terrible winters, I should like to live in New York. Some day I suppose I shall have to spend a good deal of my time here. The houses eleven stories high, that seem trying to climb into the moon,—the tremendous streets and roads,—the cascading thunder of the awful torrent of life,—the sense of wealth-force and mind power that oppresses the stranger here,—all these form so colossal a contrast with the inert and warmly coloured Southern life that I know not how to express my impression. I can only think that I have found superb material for a future story, in which the influence of New York on a Southern mind may be described. Well, new as these things may seem to me, they are, no doubt, old and uninteresting to you,—so that I shall not bore you with my impressions. I will look forward to our next meeting, when, during a longer stay in Cincinnati, I can tell you such little experiences of my trip as may please you. I want to get into that dear little shop of yours again. I dreamed of it the other night, and heard the ticking of the old clock like a man's feet treading on pavement far away; and I saw the Sphinx, with the mother and child in her arms, move her monstrous head, and observe: "The sky of New York is grey!"

When I woke up it was *grey*, and it remained grey until to-day. Even now it is not like our summer blue. It looks higher and paler and colder. We are nearer to God in the South, just as we are nearer to Death in that terrible and splendid heat of the Gulf Coast.

When I write God, of course I mean only the World-Soul, the mighty and sweetest life of Nature, the great Blue Ghost, the Holy Ghost which fills planets and hearts with beauty.

Believe me, Dear Old Dad,
Affectionately, your son,
LAFCADIO HEARN

3. *Lafcadio Hearn to Henry Watkin*

YOKOHOMA, April 25, 1890

DEAR OLD DAD:

I was very happy to feel that your dear heart thought about me; I also have often found myself dreaming of you. I arrived here, by way of Canada and Vancouver, after passing some years in the West Indies. I think I shall stay here for some years. I have not been getting rich,—quite the contrary; but I am at least preparing a foundation for ultimate independence,—if I keep my health. It is very good now, but I have many gray hairs, and I shall be next June forty years old.

I trust to make enough in a year or two to realize my dream of a home in the West Indies; if I succeed, I must try to coax you to come along, and dream life away quietly where all is sun and beauty. But no one ever lived who seemed more a creature of circumstances than I; I drift with various forces in the direction of the least resistance,—resolve to love nothing, and love always too much for my own peace of

mind,—places, things, and persons, and lo! presto! everything is swept away, and becomes a dream,—like life itself.

Perhaps there will be a great awakening; and each will cease to be an Ego, but an All, and will know the divinity of Man by seeing, as the veil falls, himself in each and all.

Here I am in the land of dreams,—surrounded by strange gods. I seem to have known and loved them somewhere before: I burn incense before them. I pass much of my time in the temples, trying to see into the heart of this mysterious people. In order to do so I have to blend with them and become a part of them. It is not easy. But I hope to learn the language; and if I do not, in spite of myself, settle here, you will see me again. If you do not, I shall be under big trees in some old Buddhist cemetery, with six lathes above me, inscribed with prayers in an unknown tongue, and a queerly carved monument typifying those five elements into which we are supposed to melt away. I trust all is well with you, dear old Dad. Write me when it will not pain your eyes. Tell me all you can about yourself. Be sure that I shall always remember you; and that my love goes to you.

LAFCADIO HEARN

I could tell you so much to make you laugh if you were here; and to hear you laugh again would make me very happy.

NOTES

24, 1. **Louvre.** An immense palace in Paris. It was the residence of several kings, but is now occupied by a museum of arts and by public offices.

2. **The King's.** Louis XIV (1643–1715). The king's eldest brother was given the title of *Monsieur;* his wife, that of *Madame;* and his eldest daughter, *Mademoiselle.* **The Duchess of Montpensier** was the daughter of Prince Gaston of Orleans, who was brother of Louis XIII (1610–1643) and son of Henri IV. At first she was expected to marry Louis XIV; later her marriage with Prince Philippe of Orleans, brother of Louis XIV, "the late Monsieur," was discussed.

25, 1. **Gourville.** A man of business, in the service of Condé.

27, 1. **Madame de Chaulnes.** The wife of the governor of Brittany.

2. **Brittany Chambers.** Besides the parliament in Paris, there were parliaments in the provinces. They had no real legislative power, being high courts of justice.

31, 1. **Non cuicunque datum est habere Nasam.** It is not given to every one to have a nose.

34, 1. **Nimeguen.** A town in the Netherlands.

38, 1. **Grand Vizier.** A high executive officer of various Mohammedan countries, especially of the Turkish empire.

39, 1. **Effendi.** A Turkish title of respect, applied especially to a state official or a man of learning, but often used simply as the courtesy title of a gentleman.

40, 1. **Kiyàya.** Lieutenant, deputy to the Grand Vizier.

42, 1. **Apelles.** A famous Greek painter who lived about B. C. 330.

43, 1. **Soucoupes.** Saucers.

48, 1. **Literæ Humaniores.** The branches of polite learning, especially the ancient classics; belles-lettres.

2. **Operam et oleum (perdere).** To lose one's time and trouble; to spend them in vain. Literally, to lose one's work and midnight oil.

49, 1. Port Royal. Port Royal des Champs, about fifteen miles from Paris, was the residence of religious and scholarly men who had withdrawn from the world to devote themselves to pious exercises, study, and the education of youth. Their contributions to classical learning were invaluable.

50, 1. Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre. The conqueror of the conqueror of the earth.

53, 1. Tom Davies (1712?–1785). A bookseller, frequently mentioned in Boswell's *Johnson*. He was socially agreeable, and on friendly terms with Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, and others of the Literary Club.

2. **Fores.** See *Macbeth* I, iii, 42 and following. For **Birnam Wood** see *Macbeth*, IV, i, 110 and following.

54, 1. The Rambler. The title of Johnson's periodical is here applied to him. The first number of *The Rambler* appeared on Tuesday, March 20, 1750, and it was issued regularly on Tuesday and Saturday until March 14, 1752. It was a successful imitation of *The Spectator*.

2. **Under my battlements.** See *Macbeth*, I, v, 43.

58, 1. Ceres. In Roman mythology, the goddess of growing vegetation. Her feast, the Cerealia, was celebrated on April 19.

63, 1. Strephon. A lovesick shepherd in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia;* hence, any lovesick person.

65, 1. Close. A narrow passage or entry leading from a street to a court and the houses within, or to the common stair of tenements.

67, 1. Robert Dodsley (1703–1764). A poet, dramatist, and bookseller, who published some of the works of Goldsmith and Johnson.

2. **Solecisms.** A term derived from the Soloi, Athenian colonists in Cilicia, who corrupted the Attic dialect; an ungrammatical combination of words in a sentence.

69, 1. Loo. A game played for stakes with three cards, or

sometimes five, dealt to each player from a full pack. When five cards are used, the highest is generally the knave of clubs, called **pam**; with three, the cards rank as in whist.

70, 1. **Sir John Fielding** (d. 1780). A half-brother of Henry Fielding, the novelist; he was a magistrate.

2. **Death without Clergy.** To undergo the sentence of death, without the privilege of being attended by a clergyman.

3. **Old Bailey.** A court of justice in London.

79, 1. **Versailles.** A town in northern France, twelve miles from Paris, famous for the palace built by Louis XIV, which now serves as a museum and art gallery. The king to whom Franklin was presented was Louis XV (1715–1774).

2. **A boire pour le Roi . . . la Reine.** A drink for the king . . . the queen.

81, 1. **Chair.** A portable chair or covered vehicle for carrying a single person, usually borne on poles by two men. It was formerly called "Sedan chair" from Sedan, France, where it was first used.

82, 1. **Dauphiness.** The wife of the heir to the French crown.

2. **Perruquier.** A maker of perukes, or wigs.

85, 1. **Temple.** A kinsman of Franklin's who served as his secretary. **Ben** was another young kinsman.

88, 1. **The Line.** The equator, or equinoctial line.

90, 1. **En bequille, à la négligée.** Styles of hair-dressing.

91, 1. **Ortolan.** A European bird, considered a table delicacy. The **lamprey** is a species of eel, esteemed by some as food.

2. **Salamis.** An island of Greece, in the Ægean Sea, famous for a naval battle in the Graeco-Persian War, in B. C. 480.

92, 1. **The Coronation.** That of George III (1760–1820).

2. **Haut pas.** A raised floor or platform; a dais.

93, 1. **Paten.** The plate, often of precious metal, on which the bread is consecrated and from which it is given in the Communion; or the plate on which the Host is placed during the Mass.

95, 1. **Barons of the Cinque Ports.** Originally there were five towns—Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover, and Sandwich—incorporated for the purpose of defending the southern seaboard of

England, in the lack of a regular navy. Other towns were added later. Up to the reign of Henry VII they had to furnish the crown with nearly all the ships and men needed for the state. In return for their services, the ports and their representatives enjoyed extensive privileges.

96, 1. Pa. William Palgrave, of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge.

97, 1. The peace. The treaty of Aix-la-chapelle (Oct., 1748), which ended the war of the Austrian succession.

98, 1. Ranelagh. Formerly a popular resort by the Thames in Chelsea, London. In 1690 Richard, Earl of Ranelagh, built a mansion and laid out fine gardens, which, in 1742, became a proprietary place of entertainment. A building was erected for concerts, and the gardens were a favorite resort of fashionable society. Here were held balls, masquerades, exhibitions of fireworks, regattas, and other forms of amusement.

2. **Masks.** People wearing masks. Women of fashion of the eighteenth century wore masks for protection and disguise.

3. **Scaramouches.** Buffoons.

4. **Japan.** Japanese lacquered ware.

5. **Auriculas.** An auricula is a variety of primrose.

100, 1. Rule a Wife and Have a Wife. A play by Beaumont and Fletcher.

103, 1. Titian. A famous Venetian painter (1477–1576).

2. **Attila.** King of the Huns (406?–453). The wall-paper was decorated with pictures suggesting the experiences of Attila and his army.

104, 1. Chiaro-scuro. The style of pictorial art that employs only light and shade, omitting the various colors; black and white.

105, 1. New reign. That of George III (1760–1820).

2. **Médecin malgré lui.** *A Doctor in Spite of Himself*, a comedy by Molière.

106, 1. Adonis. A style of wig worn in the eighteenth century.

110, 1. Homer. Cowper translated Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

111, 1. Phaeton. The sun-god, Helios. He induced his father, Apollo, to permit him for one day to drive the chariot of the sun; with his lack of skill, he would have set the world on fire, had he not been struck down with a thunderbolt by Zeus.

113, 1. The Tower. The Tower of London, originally a fortress, a royal palace, and a prison for political offenders. It is now used as an arsenal and repository of objects of public interest.

121, 1. Dan to Beersheba. Two cities in the northern and southern extremities of the Holy Land. The distance between them was considered, in Biblical times, a long journey.

122, 1. Miss Edgeworth. Maria Edgeworth (1767–1849), a novelist; she went to Edgeworthstown, Ireland, in 1782. In 1823, she visited Scott at Abbotsford, and he returned her visit in 1825. Her novel, *Castle Rack-rent*, contains vigorous descriptions of Irish character.

129, 1. Covent Garden. A square which was once the site of a convent (whence the name); now the principal fruit, flower, and vegetable market of London. In the eighteenth century, there were many coffee-houses in its vicinity.

2. **Cheapening.** To cheapen, to ask the price of; to bid, bargain, or chaffer for. Archaic.

131, 1. Skiddaw. A mountain in central Cumberland, England.

132, 1. Charles Lloyd. (1775–1839). The son of a Quaker banker and philanthropist, and the friend of Coleridge, Lamb, and De Quincey.

134, 1. Benefice. In the church of England, a rectory, vicarage, or curacy, bestowed by one in high authority. The holder of a benefice is often a non-resident, and the duties of the office are discharged by one of lower official rank.

135, 1. Diogenes. A Greek Cynic philosopher (B. C. 412?–323?). According to tradition, he lived in a tub.

2. **Mandarinesses.** A mandarin is a Chinese public officer of one of the nine grades entitled to wear a button on the hat.

136, 1. Figurantes. A figurant is one who figures in any scene, without taking a prominent part.

2. **Euclid.** A Greek geometrician who lived about B. C. 300.

137, 1. Astræa. In classical mythology, Astræa was the goddess of justice, daughter of Zeus. She was the last of the divinities to leave the earth at the end of the Golden Age.

138, 1. Shuts amain. A quotation from Milton's *Lycidas*, l. 110.

139, 1. Grub Street. A London street (now called Milton Street) described by Dr. Johnson as "much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems, whence any mean production is called *grubstreet;* petty and needy writers, or literary hacks."

140, 1. Thetis. A Nereid, wife of Peleus and mother of Achilles; she was a sea-nymph and an attendant on Neptune.

141, 1. Hypochondriacal. Affected with hypochondria, a morbid depression of mind and spirits.

2. **Bastile.** A castle or fortress in Paris, built in the fourteenth century, and used as a prison for political offenders. The populace stormed it, July 14, 1789, and demolished it. Lamb calls the invalid's room a Bastile.

143, 1. The prince. Prince Demetri Ivanowitch Dolgorouki, attached to the Russian embassy at Madrid.

153, 1. Alexander . . . . Bucephalus. A picture by Haydon, representing Alexander the Great and his horse.

156, 1. Badly used. Haydon had many difficulties. He was not elected to the Royal Academy; his pictures were hung in the wrong rooms or refused a place altogether. He offended the authorities of the British Gallery, who refused to give a prize to his "Macbeth," when it clearly deserved it.

162, 1. Bason. Napoleon constructed great docks or basins in Antwerp; one of them is now called the Little or Napoleon dock.

2. **Peter Paul Rubens.** (1577–1640). A Flemish painter.

3. **Au fait.** Literally, to the act or fact; skilled, expert.

164, 1. Accursed affairs. Shelley had just been deprived of the custody of his children by the courts of England.

166, 1. Accursed cause. Shelley dedicated his life to the cause of freedom, and tried to secure by his pamphlets, poems, and dramas political, religious, and social liberty for the English. He was heartily in sympathy with the ideals of the French Revolution, and keenly disappointed when democracy seemed to have been checked in its progress. This letter records his feeling of discouragement over the outlook in England.

2. **Circean Palace.** The palace of Circe, who, in the *Odyssey*, was a sorceress living on the island of Æaea. Those who visited her were first feasted and then by magic turned into beasts.

168, 1. Pulvis ipecac. simplex. A medicinal powder, made from the root of a South American plant, largely used in medicine as an emetic.

170, 1. Don Quixotes. Don Quixote was the hero of a celebrated Spanish romance of the same name, written by Cervantes. Under the influence of books of chivalry, he felt himself called on to become an impossible knight-errant.

171, 1. Meg Merrilies. A half-crazy gypsy and nurse in Scott's *Guy Mannering*. She aids in the abduction of her charge, Harry, and loses her life in the effort to restore him.

179, 1. John Carlyle. John and Alexander (Alick) Carlyle, brothers of Thomas Carlyle. **Little Jane** was a namesake and kinswoman of Jane Welsh Carlyle.

181, 1. Soopit ower wi' her tails. Knocked over with her skirts.

183, 1. Bit haddin' o' your ain. A place of your own.

184, 1. Templand. The home of Jane Carlyle's grandparents in Scotland.

186, 1. Spencer's heroine. Una, "a lovely ladie," the personification of truth, in Spenser's *Fœrie Queene*.

2. **Formerly.** Hawthorne served in the custom-house at Boston, 1838–41. Subsequent to the date of this letter, he was surveyor of the port of Salem, 1846–49, and United States consul at Liverpool, 1853–57.

193, 1. Wade Hampton. A cavalry commander in the Confederate service in the Civil War, governor of South Carolina, and United States senator. **Benjamin Harvey Hill** was the representative from Georgia to the Confederate Congress, and United States Senator, 1875–1876.

198, 1. Rus, quando te aspiciam. Country, when shall I behold thee?

200, 1. Mogadore. A fortified seaport city in Morocco, Africa, on the Atlantic coast; it was bombarded by the French, Aug. 16, 1844.

2. **Titmarsh.** A pen-name of Thackeray.

201, 1. James Spedding (1808–1881). An English author, editor of the works of Bacon.

2. **Arcades ambo.** Quoted from Virgil's *Ecolgue* 7, 4: *Arcades ambo, et cantare pares et respondere parati;* both Arcadians, companions prepared to sing and to respond.

204, 1. Die schöne Fräulein ist krank. The pretty young lady is ill.

206, 1. Squeers. The cruel and ignorant schoolmaster of Dotheboys Hall (Yorkshire) in Dickens's novel, *Nicholas Nickleby.* **Smike, Nicholas,** and **Fanny Squeers** are characters in the same novel.

209, 1. 'Creedy's. Macready, the actor, whose name was thus pronounced by one of Charles Dickens's little boys.

213, 1. Bracebridge Hall. For a description see Irving's *Bracebridge Hall.*

2. **Boabdil.** The last Moorish king of Granada. For further accounts of his life, see Irving's *Conquest of Granada.*

3. **Diedrich Knickerbocker.** Washington Irving published in 1809 a burlesque history of New York, under the pen name of Diedrich Knickerbocker.

215, 1. Lincoln's Inn Fields. The largest square in London.

2. **Cant.** Dickens refers to the *Christmas Carol,* by means of which he struck a blow at cant and hypocrisy and put new meaning into the Christmas season and its observance.

3. **Romeo.** The story of the love of Romeo of the house of Montague for Juliet of the rival Capulet family is the subject of Shakespeare's tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet.*

217, 1. **Bradbury and Evans.** Proprietors of *Punch,* and publishers for Dickens and Thackeray. Dickens refers to them here as the firm to which he would address his letter.

220, 1. **Dolby.** Dickens's secretary and the business manager of his American lecture tour.

222, 1. **Arethusa.** A nymph in Greek mythology. According to Pausanias, Alpheus, a mighty hunter, was enamored of Arethusa, one of the retinue of Artemis; Arethusa fled to Ortygia near Syracuse, where she was changed into a spring. Alpheus, in the form of a river, made his way beneath the sea, and united his waters with those of the spring.

223, 1. **Sorrento.** A town in the province of Naples, Italy, situated on the Bay of Naples; a favorite watering-place.

224, 1. **Warlock.** A sorcerer, a wizard.

226, 1. **Trenton Falls.** A series of picturesque cascades in West Canada Creek, Oneida County, New York, near Utica.

231, 1. **Cerealia.** See note on Ceres, p. 268.

232, 1. **Micawber.** One of the principal characters in Dickens's *David Copperfield,* remarkable for his optimism and belief that "something will turn up."

2. **Caius Julius.** (B. C. 100–44). A famous Roman general, statesman, orator, and writer.

233, 1. **Richard Henry Stoddard** (1825–1903). An American poet and literary critic. **George Henry Boker** (1823–1890) was an American poet, dramatist, and diplomatist. **Bayard Taylor** (1825–1878) was an American poet, traveler, writer of travels, translator, and novelist.

235, 1. **Tithe-pig.** A pig paid as a tithe, often the poorest in the litter. Lowell does not use the word seriously.

2. **Jean Jacques Rousseau** (1712–1778). An eminent Swiss-French philosopher. He sent his five children to the Foundling Asylum.

236, 1. Lope de Vega (1562–1635). A Spanish dramatist and poet, and the founder of the Spanish theatre.

2. **Catorce versos dicen que es soneto.** Fourteen lines say that it is a sonnet.

3. **Petrarch** (1304–1374). The great Italian poet and first true reviver of learning in mediaeval Europe. The most famous event in his history was his meeting Laura in 1327. It is uncertain who Laura was, but Petrarch loved her passionately and expressed his love in a series of sonnets.

238, 1. Capital little book. *The Story of a Bad Boy.*

239, 1. The Mysteries of Udolpho. A romance by Mrs. Radcliffe, published in 1794.

240, 1. Frau von Stein (1742–1827). A German lady of Weimar, noted for her friendship with Goethe.

243, 1. Rogers's Italy. Samuel Rogers (1832–1898) was an English poet. His principal poems are "Pleasures of Memory" and "Italy." In Rogers's "Italy," an Italian bride hides herself and is imprisoned in a spring-locked trunk; the skeleton is found long afterward.

245, 1. Derby. A race instituted by an Earl of Derby in 1786 for three-year-old horses. It is run annually at Epsom, near London.

246, 1. Irish University Question. Arnold was making great effort to secure the passage of the University Education, Ireland Bill. **Catholics.** See Arnold's article "Irish Catholicism and British Liberalism," in the *Fortnightly Review*, November, 1878.

250, 1. Johnny Gilpin. William Cowper in 1785 published a ballad called "John Gilpin," from the name of its hero.

2. **Dahabieh.** A house-boat used on the Nile.

253, 1. Elie de Beaumont (1798–1874). A celebrated French geologist.

2. **Laves mousseuses.** A frothy lava.

255, 1. Shylock—Portia. In Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, Shylock the Jew endeavors to exact from Antonio's body the pound of flesh as a forfeit, but he is thwarted by Portia, who plays the rôle of a lawyer.

259, 1. Papa chases. Possibly a misprint for "papaw chases," meaning lots or enclosures where the papaw, a tropical fruit resembling the banana, was cultivated.

261, 1. General N. B. Forrest. A general in the Confederate service of the Civil War.

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